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The unique message and the
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The Unique Message and the Universal Mission of Christianity

The Unique Message and The Universal Mission of Christianity

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By
JAMES FRANKLIN LOVE, D.D.

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Preface

THE purpose of this book is to show that the fundamental and saving doctrines of Christianity are peculiar to the Christian religion, to secure larger rights for the message which these doctrines constitute and to help fulfill the universal mission of Christianity.

The course of the discussion as thus indicated involves questions belonging to the science of comparative religion; but our aim being practical and evangelical, we deal with what we consider to be the essence of Christianity more than with the common content of Christianity and other great religions. The title which we have given these chapters, *The Unique Message and the Universal Mission of Christianity*, suggests a contrast rather than a comparison of Christianity with other religions, and that is the real nature of the discussion. The already voluminous and increasing literature which may be classed as studies in comparative religion, covering as it does all phases of ethnic and Christian faith, may be necessary to a broad intellectual and scientific study of religion, and the emphasis which it puts on the common elements of religions may be serviceable, but it ought to be obvious that such discursive method is

not necessary to the most practical and profitable religious study.

In view of the outline of Christian doctrines which we give, the question may arise as to certain related matters of Christian belief. Let it be said, then, that we are not inclined to ignore even minor points of Christian doctrine and practice. But it must be patent that these correlative tenets need not on all occasions be the subject of defense. They will indeed be taken care of when the fundamentals to which they are related receive proper respect. Take care of the doctrines and you will take care of the duties. When a slight is given a Christian duty the cause usually lies back of it and is to be attributed to a wrong attitude to religious authority and a false sense of the sacredness and inviolableness of the truth. A full recognition of Christian essentials and a genuine reverence for them will foster a respect and jealousy for all truth and all duties which Christianity prescribes. A proper safeguarding of the roots and great trunk of the tree of Christian doctrine will secure protection to every limb and twig of minor but intimately related matter.

There is a special class of doctrines which one must not even seem to minify and which some, perhaps, may expect to find set forth among the peculiar and fundamental doctrines; such, namely, as Regeneration, Justification by faith, etc. These are, indeed, distinctive Christian doctrines and belong to the very essence of the evangelical gospel;

but we conceive of them as gathered about the great doctrines and as implied in them. They indicate the way by which these are made effectual and explain how their benefits are procured. They will always receive a relatively adequate treatment by the man who gives a Scriptural setting to the Atonement, Regeneration, etc. While we do not number them in these pages, they are not only implied in the discussion but are emphasized in connection with these constitutive doctrines. Some readers may think that sin and human depravity ought to be included in our outline of the distinctive Christian doctrines. The Christian doctrine of sin is indeed peculiar to Christianity and fundamental to evangelical faith, but we conceive of it as having its distinctive Christian significance chiefly in the light of and in its relation to the doctrines of the New Birth and the Atonement, and for this reason have given attention to it in connection with these subjects and that of futurity rather than in a separate chapter.

All the teachings of the New Testament cluster about certain preëminent truths there taught and corroborated by Christian experience and illustrated in Christian history. Christianity also comprehends some things which are common to all religious systems that represent any degree of serious thought on the great mysteries of life; but these common features do not constitute the essence of Christianity. A knowledge of the elements in heathenism which are common to all

religion, will doubtless, as Jevons has shown, be of service to the missionary by enabling him more skillfully to insinuate his message into the heathen mind, but it is a radically unique message, the solitary gospel, he must deliver or he should stay at home. The vital doctrines which evangelical Christians insist upon as essential to the preservation of Christianity and the salvation of souls, are absolutely unique. A study of these in the light of the advanced knowledge of other religions and the religious needs of men will convince all but the hopelessly blind that the world needs the religion which has such truth and help to offer.

Men of broad intellectual horizons and large observation are discovering the world's need to be the essential Christian truths. Philosophers like Balfour are asking: "Where and what are the immutable doctrines which, in the opinion of theologians, ought to be handed down as a sacred trust from generation to generation?" The late Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall faced this question. Equipped with adequate scholarship and favoured with unusual opportunities for study of religious questions, he found, as he tells us, that there is "a growing conviction that in the religion of our Lord Jesus Christ are certain universal and permanent elements which constitute the essence of religion,"[1] and asks: "What are those fundamental and universal elements? Where do we look for them? This is the question which perhaps more

[1] "Universal Elements of Christian Religion," p. 126.

than any other has been forcing itself upon the present age."[1] It is to be regretted that he did not answer these questions. He does, however, assure us that they are to be found in Christianity and that the Eastern religions stand in need of them. "The more attentively we study them (the ethnic faiths) estimating their fitness to minister to the religious needs of man, the more obvious becomes their moral inadequacy."

The peculiar merit of any religion consists in its distinctiveness and it is by a contrast of their peculiar doctrines and not by a comparison of their common elements that the value of different religions can be judged. It has seemed to us that it is just here that some writers on Christian essentials, as well as on comparative religion, have missed the mark. They have gone far afield in search of common and minor matters to the neglect of the great and decisive elements. Indeed, in some of the popular treatises it is precisely the fundamental doctrines that have been missed or ignored altogether. Harnack, assuming to answer the question: "What is Christianity?" lays down as "the whole of the gospel" these three elements, viz.: "The Kingdom of God," "God as the Father and the infinite value of the human soul," and "the higher righteousness as showing itself in love."[2] This is a wholly arbitrary analysis of the gospel and does not even discover its remedial essence at all.

[1] "Universal Elements of Christian Religion," p. 135.
[2] "What is Christianity?" pp. 154, 155, 174.

We have ventured to outline the fundamental doctrines of Christianity which also distinguishes it from other religions as, (1) A Self-Verifying Revelation from God—the Old and New Testament Scriptures; (2) A Personally Revealed Deity—the Incarnation of Christ; (3) Deity Suffering in behalf of Humanity—the Doctrine of the Atonement; (4) The Spiritual Regeneration of the Individual—the Doctrine of the New Birth; (5) the Moral Invigoration of Man—the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit; (6) Immortality Demonstrated—the Resurrection of Christ; (7) A Rational Futurity—the Biblical Doctrine of Heaven and Hell.

These general statements are *inclusive*, comprehending a great variety of related themes which elucidate, amplify and apply them. They are *distinctive* doctrines of Christianity, no other religion in the world possessing one of them. They are *essential* truths of Christianity, the sacred welfare of the soul being hazarded upon them. They are *dynamic* doctrines, vitalizing the moral natures of men wherever preached. They should, therefore, be preached by all and proclaimed everywhere. They are unique and have a universal mission.

Although we wish, above all things, to concentrate attention upon these fundamental and distinctive doctrines of the Christian religion, it seems necessary to prepare a proper setting for them by a brief discussion of certain general questions which arise in connection with any consider-

ation of the nature and mission of Christianity. In view of such questions and because our plan purposely disencumbers the main discussion of such matters, we give precedence in position, though not in importance, to Part I, which is of the nature of an introduction. It is believed that the matters treated and disposed of in these introductory chapters will help to show that our claim for the great Christian doctrines is valid and insure a larger valuation of them by the reader and that deeper conviction of the world's need of them which is the aim of the whole discussion to beget.

If the main proposition of the book is true, it must establish at once the firmest basis for Christian missionary effort aud the strongest motive to it. If the things which save men and save Christianity are confined to Christianity, no man can consistently be a Christian and not be missionary. If, by our distinctive doctrines only men can be saved and the Christian religion can persist, all liberal giving, all service, hardship and sacrifice necessary to preserve these truths and carry them to every human being in our own and all lands, and induce men everywhere to receive them, are plainly justified. But these practical values of the study will receive attention in the closing chapter when we indulge the hope that the reader will be better prepared to consider them and the arguments which enforce these duties will have more weight.

It is fitting that I should say that the convictions which impelled this study took possession of me several years ago in the line of pastoral duty, instruction and responsibility, and that most of the material was then accumulated and much that is found in these pages was written. In the hope that the time would come when the privileges of leisure and research would again be mine and this study might be made more worthy and profitable, the manuscript has laid in a drawer of my neglected desk, receiving an occasional emendation and addition as the result of new light from some new book which I have read *en route* to and fro on secretarial duty and occasional hours snatched, usually from the all too few evenings spent at home, for work of this sort. As there is little prospect of leisure in which to better fulfill my ambition and give these thoughts better form, I give them as they are to an indulgent public.

J. F. L.

Dallas, Texas.

Contents

PART I

I.	Man a Religious Being	17
II.	A Supernatural Revelation a Human Necessity	29
III.	The Common Elements in Religion	52
IV.	Is One Religion for All Men a Reasonable Hope?	76

PART II

I.	A Self-verifying Revelation from God—The Old and New Testament Scriptures	99
II.	A Personally Revealed Deity—The Doctrine of the Incarnation	128
III.	Deity Suffering on Behalf of Humanity—The Doctrine of the Atonement	148
IV.	The Moral Transformation of the Individual—The Doctrine of the New Birth	165
V.	The Moral Invigoration of the Individual—The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit	181
VI.	Immortality Demonstrated—The Resurrection of Jesus	198
VII.	A Rational Futurity—The Christian Doctrine of Heaven and Hell	217
VIII.	Conclusions	232

PART I

I

MAN A RELIGIOUS BEING

HUMAN nature will always hold the race to religion. Man is by nature a religious being, *the* religious animal, and his nature will keep alive in him an interest in the religious question. Religion is the one surviving aspect of popular interest in every age. All other questions are issues of the hour. Religion is not custom; it is nature. It will remain a vital question so long as nature and human nature remain unchanged fundamentally. To speak of a man's "getting religion" is to misstate the case. Every man has religion and needs salvation.

Religiousness is a function of the human creature. To exercise himself religiously,—to worship, pray, sacrifice, or in some way gratify the religious instinct—is as primal a law and as spontaneous an act as any of his life. Irreligiousness is assumed superficiality. It is natural to be religious; it is unnatural to be unreligious or irreligious. The irreligious man is either acting a part, a farce, or he is an abnormal and unnatural specimen of his species. Says Victor Hugo, "Some men deny the Infinite; some, too, deny the sun; they are the blind."

It is a fact upon which travellers are as unani-

mously agreed as upon any other fact which they observe in common, that there is not a race or tribe of men among which this characteristic does not prevail. Low types have low forms of religion, but all men everywhere exercise themselves religiously. That is to say, the religious function is found to characterize all, though a more perfect development is witnessed in some than in others. There is in all an instinct, a craving, a sense of need and dependence, responsive sensibilities to spiritual realities and influences about and above them. All may not understand the mystery of these, nor rightly interpret them, but all are conscious of them and show plainly that they possess religious capacity.

Laughter and crying do not signify more normal, common and fundamental facts of child-nature than the crudest worship does of man's religious nature. Religion, like the power of speech, is a birthright into which every normal human being comes in due time though it be by a long period of lisping and stammering. The child takes to religion as naturally as to talking. It is only a question of what religious forms his nature will express itself in as it is what particular language or dialect he will speak, and both are matters of environment, example, and instruction, largely. With all his seeming irreverence, non-conformity and willful iconoclasm, Theodore Parker admitted the religious sentiment to be "The strongest and deepest element in human nature." This is similar to Professor Fisk's pronouncement: "That inward convic-

tion, the craving for final cause, the theistic assumption, is itself one of the master-facts of the universe." Much to the same effect is Carlyle's familiar saying, that "Man's unhappiness . . . comes from his greatness; is because there is an infinite in him which with all his cunning, he cannot bury under the finite." And this reminds one of a fine passage in George Romanes' "Thoughts On Religion," in which this intellectual prodigal, after his return to his Father's house, uses this common instinct as an argument for the reality of superhuman spiritual verities. He says, "The religious instincts are unquestionably very general, very persistent and very powerful. . . . Here, I think, we have an argument of legitimate force . . . because, if the religious instincts of the human race point to no reality as their object, they are out of analogy with all other endowment. Elsewhere in the animal kingdom, we never meet with such a thing as an instinct pointing aimlessly. . . . In a word, if animal instincts generally, like organic structure and inorganic systems, are held to betoken purpose, the religious nature of man would stand out as an anomaly in the general scheme of things if it alone were purposeless, . . . a contradiction which can only be overcome by supposing either that nature conceals God, while man reveals Him, or that nature reveals God while man misrepresents Him."[1] Dr. Fairbairn affirms the universality

[1] "Thoughts on Religion," pp. 182, 183.

of this instinct and points out a sociological application of it in a passage too striking to be omitted here. "Mark!—Man is a religious being. Look to the north and south, the east and west and what do you see? religions. Wherever you turn—man; wherever man—religion. 'No,' says some very wise person, 'not at all; there are low tribes, far down in the scale, found without any religious customs, without any religious ideas; religion is not universal.' Well, I will not discuss the matter, but will only say this: The greatest ethnographers,—that is the men who have most extensively studied the customs, the manners, the beliefs of men,—are on my side affirming the opposite. But I do not stand on that. If you insist on it, let us grant that there are low tribes without religion. What then? Why this: to be without it is to have fallen into savagery; to be without it is to have the sure indelible mark of lost manhood and utter barbarism. A great and distinguished thinker, Schelling, wrote a great book which started from this principle:—Man in the very act of founding society realizes religion; without religion there is no society; at its root, in all its customs, throughout all its laws, religion runs; and society is only where religion has begun to be. And that is a simple certain fact. No man who knows ethnography, sociology, or whatever he may call this science which deals with the origins of institutions and civilization, will question it for a moment. Society and religion, as it

were, begin to be together. Man cannot be a social and therefore a civilized being until he has religion." [1]

The presence everywhere of an inner compulsion to worship is not only now a universal fact of human life, but it has ever been. There is no vanished race or civilization or tribe of men of which we have historical knowledge that did not exhibit this intuition and, under the religious impulse, observe some sort of religious rites. The chief monuments ancient generations have left us of themselves and the social order as they framed it, and amidst which they lived, are symbols of their religious beliefs. This is, more than any other, the significance of the excavated relics of pottery, sculpture, and architecture. These sundry emblems of a common instinct for religion constitute the principal monuments they have left us. We know more about their religion than about any common custom they observed. By these signs of their religions they have their earthly immortality. They wrote an indelible religious history. This history seems to be kept for the eternal assizes when "the books shall be opened." What the fashions, the political creeds and partizanships among them were we may not know. All vestiges of these may have faded long ago, but all have left some symbol or memorial of their religion. There

[1] "Religion in History and Modern Life," by A. M. Fairbairn, pp. 71–72. See also a fine passage, too long to quote here, in his "Philosophy of the Christian Religion," pp. 186–200.

has been found no race which, judged by the memorials it has left, did not have this instinct. And no other animal, past or present, does have it. The story which the servants of our childhood told us, that cows and sheep reverently and simultaneously got on their knees on a certain night in the year, we have long since found to be a fable. The physical evolutionist may yet be called upon to explain why no thoroughbred animal has even yet been found to worship and that the lowest and most ancient man known to us did.

Nor is there probability of a change. Man not only has been and is, but will remain religious. As Sabatier says he is "incurably religious." He is no prophet, but rather a poor specimen of the intellectualism he preaches, who forecasts the supersedure of religion by culture. Culture may cause a man to change his views of religion, but cannot change his instinct for it. Men may outgrow their ignorance, but not their natures. Religiousness is constitutional and, therefore, ineradicable. The currents of human opinion are on the surface and, though they may change, do not affect the deep tides of nature. Knowledge will illuminate religion but will never eliminate it. There are what Tyndall calls "Unquenchable claims of his moral and emotional nature which the understanding can never satisfy." [1]

The imperious and inexorable laws of nature will hold the race to religion until at last an enlightened

[1] "Fragments of Science," p. 213.

judgment and a famishing nature shall discover which of the many systems is best. Indeed, is it not a fact, that true education and true religion have much the same end in view, namely, to create a passion for truth and a genuine refinement of spirit? Both desire to see the human mind and spirit freed from the fetters of its ignorance and false knowledge, and society of cruelty and coarseness. When both are genuine, culture and religion mutually help each other. The high end of education is not to give men strong minds, but correct discernment and refined, sensitive souls; and this last is of the nature of religion. It renders the faculties responsive to the claims of truth, justice, mercy, which involve the laws of God, the rights of human life and neighbourly duties. The man who is truly Christian, is the friend of culture, and the truly cultured is the friend of Christianity. Neither could fulfill his aims for human society without the other. Nothing is so boorish and vulgar and, therefore, further short of culture, than infidelity.

The fact is, the advance of education and the increase of culture gives new vitality and brighter prospect to true religion. Particular beliefs and practices are modified or abandoned in the light of better knowledge, but religion itself is vitalized and given new power and effectiveness. The religious reformation and the renaissance of culture always appear together and often the historian is puzzled to know which of the two is the forerunner. The

higher culture and the more vital religion, which jointly burst the bands of the old order, have often been embodied in the same person. In such times religious beliefs get more clearly defined, grow in certainty, are held with more unwavering consistency and conviction, the defense of them becomes more religious and their use more practical and beneficial. Interest in religious questions is keenest where true culture is highest. Enlightenment is the enemy of false religion and the false in religion only. With advance of modern science and education, for instance, belief in God has become more rational, the doctrine of immortality more reasonable. Rampant criticism of the doctrine of human depravity and divine retribution are struck dumb before the verdict of physical science concerning heredity and penalty operative in natural laws.

All this is confirmatory of the proposition that man is religious and will never abandon religion. "There are no symptoms that man is losing his interest in religion in consequence of his increasing knowledge,"[1] because knowledge does not change nature. There is a foundation for religion deep in man's nature and the depths of all things hold their course. Human opinion may be ruffled and human thought may, for a time, seem to run counter to religion, but the deep gulf-stream of religious sentiment flows on forever. The fair, bright day, the prophetic day of the scholar, will come, and with

[1] "Ten Great Religions," by J. F. Clarke, p. 490.

its light and calm there will be change, but it will be the change of the eddies and waves on the surface lost in the deep waters of religious reality now that the storm has passed, and henceforth to flow with the steady tide, which had its origin in God and which keeps unalterably the course which He determined. Education and culture cannot destroy man's religious nature, and they offer no real substitute for religion. They have nothing to satisfy the unquenchable thirst, the imperious demands of man's moral and spiritual nature. With the advance of science and knowledge there will be a change of food, but man will still require to be fed, his soul not less than his body. The constitutional hungers, thirsts, aspirations of men are the same today as when the race began its long journey which leads up an interminable ascent. Among these constitutional cravings there is none more universal, constant, and of which he has a deeper consciousness than that for the objects which religion alone holds out to him, God, immortality, and escape from the consequences of wrong-doing. Amidst all the fluctuations and change, "Abideth faith, hope, love." No physical or mental want is more inexorable, none gives more pleasure by its gratification, none causes more distress when gratification is denied or disappointed, than man's religious desires. There is nothing in knowledge, power, possession or position to sate this hunger.

Indeed the unsatisfaction which great spirits find in other things throws light on this question of

man's need of religion. Perhaps the false religions represent the efforts of great men to find satisfaction in religious inquiry when all else had failed to satiate their conscious cravings. Very certain it is, that some to whom the world has allowed most of its preferments have found that they did not satisfy. Goethe said to his friend Eckermann, "I have ever been esteemed one of Fortune's chiefest favourites; nor can I complain of the course my life has taken. Yet, truly, there has been nothing but toil and care; and in my seventy-fifth year I may say that I have never had four weeks of genuine pleasure. The stone was ever to be rolled upward." There you have the tragedy and pathos of a great man starving a nature naturally religious. Diocletian found more pleasure in a vegetable garden than on a throne and voluntarily surrendered the latter for the first, as Charles the Fifth surrendered more diadems than any other human brow ever wore for a cell in a lonely monastery. It is even as Tennyson says, "Fame is half disfame," and all too poor a thing to satisfy a human soul with infinite spiritual cravings.

George Romanes bears testimony from another quarter, but equally pertinent. He says, "I know from experience the intellectual distractions of scientific research, philosophical speculation, and artistic pleasures; but am also well aware that even when all are taken together and well sweetened to taste, in respect of consequent reputation, means, social position, etc., the whole concoction is but as

high confectionery to a starving man. . . . It is by God decreed that fame shall not satisfy highest need. It has been my lot to know not a few of the famous men of our generation, and I have always observed it is profoundly true . . . as soon as one end of distinction is reached, another is pined for. There is no finality to rest in, while disease and death are always standing in the background. . . .

"This whole negative side of the subject proves a vacuum in the soul of man which nothing can fill save faith and God." [1]

That man must have religion is proven by the very patronage which he gives false religions and his susceptibility to the errors and fallacies which often attach to true religion. As the appetites of children lead them to eat unripe fruit and other unwholesome food placed within their reach, so races in their childhood seek to satisfy their spiritual wants upon imperfect and false religions and immature souls in Christian lands imbibe pernicious heresies. Impostors take advantage of unsound judgment and natural craving. So many religions and so many varieties of religious belief could not flourish in the world if the market were not made active by the religious needs of men. It is this soul-hunger that makes trade for the religious fakir. With advancing knowledge the demand for religion will not be less, because human nature will remain the same, but in the light of that

[1] Life of Romanes, by his wife, pp. 151–152.

knowledge man will demand the best article obtainable. He will seek a more rational and wholesome gratification of his religious nature as he does of the physical in requiring better food, bodily comforts, and social pleasures. The African's religion, like his wardrobe and his music, and the Chinaman's religion, like his shoes and pigtail, will appear ridiculous and grotesque to the man of real culture and refinement. The change will not be from fetishism and ancestor-worship to non-religion, but from these lower types to the best religion and the best in religion, to Christianity and the finest type of the Christian. "The jury of the world will ultimately demand to know the truth and the whole truth." [1]

[1] Byron Jevons, "Introduction to the Study of Comparative Religion," p. 21.

II

A SUPERNATURAL REVELATION A HUMAN NECESSITY

FINDING man to be a religious being, we also find that his religious nature, like his physical and mental, must be trained. Left to spontaneous expression, nothing in his nature leads to such monstrous excesses as his proneness for religion. The light which is in him becomes his greatest darkness. A divine revelation is as necessary to the soul as light is to the eye. Without it man gropes in the darkness, feeling after God, if haply he may find Him—a blind soul seeking a lost Deity. There are other feeble sources of moral light as there are stars in the night; but like the stars, they do not suffice in strength of illumination. An impulse so powerful must receive instruction and guidance.

1. External nature gives some hints concerning things which affect the soul's high interests. The observant and contemplative mind is often religiously affected by natural objects and forces; but this is because it finds an analogy rather than a real revelation of moral truth in nature, and is due to religious prepossessions. There has been a reading into nature before there has been a reading out. And while it must be admitted that there is

in nature, its wide-spreading trees, great waters, mountains and luminous worlds, that which sometimes arouses dominant religious emotions, it does not always direct them properly, and is not a reliable moral guide as it is not a sufficient one.

Two classes of minds have made much of nature as a teacher, namely, the scientific and the poetic. Bacon said: "Question nature and she will answer you truly." To him nature had voices because he had a scientist's ears. He could read "in nature's open book" because his training had given him a discerning vision. It was a modern scientist who looked up from his laboratory and microscope and read plainly a marvellous revelation of "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." This he was able to do because he was both a scientist and a Christian; because he had carried to the study of nature fine spiritual sensibilities and a mind whose every faculty was so trained as to discern natural law and the variations of natural phenomena. The Christian went to the laboratory to study science in the light of religion, and the scientist came into the study to investigate religion in the light of science. He found striking analogies. But Drummond was frank enough to say of the unchristian scientist, "Men could find out the order in which the world was made; but what they could not find out was that God had made it. To this day they have not found out." [1]

The poets have made much of nature. It was an

[1] "Life of Drummond," by Geo. A. Smith, p. 262.

ancient poet who heard ringing down the corridors of centuries the rhythmic melody, the first nature-pean wherein,

> "The morning stars sang together,
> And all the sons of God shouted for joy;"
> (*Job xxxviii.* 7.)

and another who wrote in the poetry of his own tongue,

> "The heavens declare the glory of God,
> And the firmament showeth His handiwork.
> Day unto day uttereth speech
> And night unto night showeth knowledge."
> (*Psa. xix.* 1–2.)

And another said:

> "His glory covered the heavens,
> And the earth was full of His praise
> And His brightness was as the light.
>
> "The deep uttered its voice
> And lifted up its hands on high.
> And the sun and the moon stood still in their habitation
> At the light of Thine arrows as they went,
> And at the shining of Thy glittering spear."
> (*Hab. iii.* 3, 4, 10 *and* 11.)

So all the innumerable company of poets have seen and heard what nature withholds from grosser mortals. Young saw such beauty in nature's face that he exclaimed: "Nature is the art of God!" and Addison:

"The stars are forever singing as they shine
The hand that made us is divine,"

and

"The spacious firmament on high
With all the blue ethereal sky
And spangled heavens a smiling frame
Their great original proclaim."

While Shakespeare declares that one finds:

"Tongues in trees, books in running brooks,
Sermons in the stones, and good in everything."

And Bailey asks:

"What are ye orbs?
The words of God?
The scripture of the sky?"

Mrs. Browning declares in bold rhetoric that there is

"No hum of lily—muffled bee but finds
Some coupling music with the whirling stars;
Earth's crammed with heaven;
Every common bush afire with God."

But these were all scholars and poets. While an Emerson may have the leisure and the learning for nature-study until,

"In the mud and scum of things
Something always, always sings,"

the message of nature is far too limited in its religious content, its speech too difficult and its

voice too soft and low to arrest the attention and meet the needs of the common man in the clamour of the world, the distractions of sin and the pre-engagements of this stressful life, and insufficient to meet all the needs of any man, whatever be his culture, his environment and his wisdom concerning nature's secrets. The best and the wisest may find in nature plain corroborations of revealed religion the tenets of which they have learned in the written Revelation; but they had not seen so much in nature or interpreted it so correctly but for the key which Revelation gave them with which to unlock God's book of nature.

Dr. Strong has made this true observation in his essay on Wordsworth: "He never would have been able to find in nature so much to awe and console; he never would have seen in her so much of truth and love if he had not carried into his contemplations what he had learned from the gospel of Christ. It is the old story of Plato's cave. He who has once explored the cave with a torch can afterwards make his way through the dark. Many an ethical philosopher like Spencer imagines his conclusions about man's being to be the result of his own insight, when in fact they are unconscious plagiarisms from Christian revelations. . . . The interpretation of nature, as well as the interpretation of man, is an exclusively Christian achievement."[1] Revelation, which Wordsworth recognized as "His pure word by

[1] "The Great Poets and Their Theology," pp. 368-369.

miracle revealed" furnished him a clue to nature. Acquainted with the Scriptures he could say in his "Intimations of Immortality,"

> "To me the meanest flower that blows can give
> Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears."

Without that clue men have neither seen the natural beauty nor high religious truth in nature. President S. C. Mitchell has said, "The Alps were discovered yesterday. Livy, though born at their foot and writing of Hannibal's heroic passage of them, betrays no kind of appreciation of their majesty and beauty." He could not see the majesty and beauty in nature because he lacked the favourable view-point. Jesus had not taken him into the fields and taught him the parable of the lily which surpassed Solomon in his glory. His instruction to "Consider the lilies" was the world's introduction to the nature-sciences. That parable has not only done more for botanical science than any lecture ever delivered in a laboratory, but more for art, pictorial and literary, than all the masters. Jesus has done equally well by all natural science and pure æsthetics. The artist-eye of the Greek was keen to discern the voluptuous and the muscular, but blind to the romance of the humble lives and the fresh purity and rich garniture of nature. Here was a challenge to His humanity and His genius but no man was found with the skill to compound the colours, though in doing so he might have found a moral hygienic for the heated imag-

ination of a sensual age and diverted a race jaded with carnality to the virtues of the needy poor and the lavish beauty of external nature. Not until the Son of God slept in a manger, chose the poor to be His companions and beneficiaries, and made the lily and the vine to preach wisdom, did artists find their subjects in the huts of the humble, the lake and the mountains, and the poets find nature to be "the living garment of the Deity"[1] and discern behind it the "image of His face." Jesus opened man's eyes, and, behold! all things were new. Religion furnished a key to nature and not nature to religion.

Moreover, nature is a book of law, while man needs a gospel. Nature's corroborations are corroborations of law; gospel is found nowhere outside of the inspired Word. The scientist may learn and teach "the eternal power and Godhead," these "being understood by the things that are made" (Rom. i. 20), but not a syllable of the gospel has been found in nature. The eternal power and Godhead to which nature is witness is not the "power of God unto salvation," but condemnation. Law argues a lawmaker, and the uniformity of nature, the unity of the Godhead and His irresistible rule. So much nature preaches, when skillfully interpreted; but what it does not make plain and what the gospel teaches specifically, is that there is hope for a man who has violated law. "The law is holy," whether exhibited in nature or "written in

[1] Goethe.

their hearts," or "received by the dispensation of angels," or "written with the finger of God" and "given by Moses," but "the law worketh wrath" for the transgressor wherever it operates. "The law was given by Moses, but grace and truth came by Jesus Christ." "What the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us" (Rom. viii. 3–4). Nature and her laws join the statutes of Inspiration in proclaiming judgment. The utmost they can do jointly, is to act as a schoolmaster to bring those they condemn in humble penitence to Christ, who "taketh away the sin of the world." God's spiritual and benevolent attributes are not revealed in nature. Indeed, they are concealed within the folds of His garment of material things. "Who coverest Thyself with light as with a garment" (Psa. civ. 2). Even light which reveals other objects conceals Him, so ineffably glorious is He. No man has seen God in nature at any time. "The only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him." A heathen said:

> "Except the gods themselves to thee unveil,
> Search as thou wilt the world thou seeks't in vain."

It is a historical fact that nature-worship has been the result of nature-teaching, when nature was the only revelation possessed. Even Words-

worth in his day was accused of making nature "a sort of God." Those who have had no other book but nature, have had no other gods but natural objects. With no other revelation but that which nature affords, men have descended to the vilest fetishism, scarcely a race excepted. The groves which Pliny tells us were the first temples and which brought men face to face with nature in their worship, early became characterized by the foulest aspects of ancient civilization. Even Israel fell to this when the tribes were scattered and the influence of the true religion was weak. "They saw every high hill, and all the thick trees and they offered there their sacrifices and there they presented the provocation" (Ezek. xx. 28). To counteract these superstitious and licentious rites of grove-worship, God pronounced some of His severest judgments; and perhaps it was in part to prevent this apostasy that the tabernacle, the temple and the church-house were appointed to be adjuncts of worship. However that may be, the point is clearly established that man needs a supplemental revelation to that which nature makes.

2. Conscience, too, has its part and its place in man's moral control; but is its voice sufficient? Does conscience enable men to know and impel them to do their religious duties without special revelation? That the normal function of conscience is religious in its nature, and that its dic-

tates have something of religious instructions in them is not to be doubted. As conscience came from its maker it was finely adjusted and from it primitive people learned much as to truth and right, but granting this, all must still admit that the heathen are left in their heathenism without a written revelation. That conscience was created for a religious purpose and that it performs a religious function there is not a reasonable doubt.

But the above questions raise others, namely, just what is that function? and what was that purpose? And all resolve themselves into the old question of whether the function of conscience is legislative or judicial. Does conscience originate law, or does it render decisions according with a law which it has been taught to recognize as a supreme standard of authority? Manifestly the latter is the case. If conscience itself were the standard of truth and right, there would not be such variance in the decisions which consciences render in given cases. Consciences pronounce judgments according to the standards of law acknowledged and respected by their respective possessors. These judgments are frequently immoral because the standards under which the decisions are rendered are false. The only way to make uniform moral decisions universal is to secure the universal recognition of a uniform moral law according to which all consciences may pronounce their judgments. Conscience always makes up its decisions in the light

of its moral standard. Conscience will always tell a man he ought or ought not but *what* he ought or ought not will be determined by the education the conscience has had. "For absolutely right decisions, conscience is dependent upon knowledge."[1] Bishop Gore, as quoted by Dr. Strong, is right: "Man's first duty is, not to *follow* his conscience, but to *enlighten* his conscience." As Dr. Strong himself puts it, "We are bound not to 'follow our conscience,' but to have a right conscience to follow."[2] The moral and religious course of men vary as the religious authority by which their consciences are regulated vary. In the pilot house of the "Coasters," the ships which do business along the seacoasts, there may be found a compass and a chart. It is safe to guide the ship by the compass only so long as the compass corresponds to the chart. For one reason or another the compass may become deranged, but the chart is unchangeable. Every man has use for the compass of conscience and the chart of Revelation; and conscience renders man the best service by keeping the course of his life true to that Chart. Being without the Chart of Revelation the course of the heathen has been devious and fateful.

God is the author of both conscience and the Bible. He made conscience first, and if it had

[1] Peabody.

[2] See Dr. Strong's discussion in "Systematic Theology," Vol. II, pp. 498–504.

been a sufficient guide and a safe court of appeal under all circumstances, He would not probably have made a Bible at all. It was precisely because conscience could not always be depended upon that He gave us a Revelation. Revelation was prepared to regulate unreliable consciences and deceptive religious experiences. It is above conscience and experience as authority, as is seen by the fact that it was given after conscience and experience jointly had failed as guides to the religious natures of men. It is the want of this Revelation as a supplement to their consciences that makes the main difference between the heathen civilizations and the Christian of to-day.

A slightly different question has been brought to the front in our time and being to the front, needs to be looked into frankly and handled courageously, for God loves men who are, to use Isaiah's phrase, "valiant for the truth on earth." The fine phrasing of the cultured advocates of "the religion of the spirit," in the delusive use of such words and phrases as "consciousness" and "the religious consciousness" deceive many. Popular preachers and writers, while skimming the surface of a subject into which Sabatier dives, have popularized this new philosophy (we would not call it theology) which is, in effect, the old question of conscience as a moral guide, dressed in the new drapery of a metaphysical and psychological verbiage. Individual consciousness or experience as final authority is the

contention. As fine as the theory is made to look, it is a dangerous heresy and as profound as seems some of the reasoning by which it is supported, it presents in fact a superficial and most partial view of human nature. The men who preach it are the product of Christian culture and of an advanced and prevailing Christian society, and the theory presupposes a race of men with Christian consciences living under like wholesome influences, for in the case of such men only could the theory have any plausibility; and in such case even, it is easy to prove from historic example that the repudiation of higher authority than their own moral consciousness and religious experience would result in sad moral lapse.

Sabatier, the head master of this school, was provincialized in his thinking by his nearness to and experience with the Roman hierarchy, against which his soul was in revolt and from which he fancied he had freed himself. Because of the overshadowing dread of false authority, he was unable to distinguish the difference between ecclesiastical and Biblical authority, between ecclesiasticism and pure revelation, between the authority of Scripture and the authority of exegesis, the authority of Christ and the authority of the Pope. He was a victim of his environment and never succeeded in thinking himself free. The nightmare of an ecclesiastical hierarchy and of an arrogant, monopolized interpretation of Scripture was upon him, and in his effort to throw it off, he kicked off the blanket of true religious authority which kept him

warm. We may compassionate him, but there is not the same excuse for men in Protestant lands who make it their business to echo his opinions. And that such should think that they have thought deeply! Let me quote a discriminating remark by President Mullins: "The fatal objection to this theory is that the Christian consciousness is not and cannot be a fixed quantity. It varies with intelligence, education, moral quality, heredity, environment, and has varied from age to age. The very law of development invoked by the advocates of the theory forbids it. Not until the law of development ceases to operate can the Christian's consciousness become the final appeal in religion. Imperfect man can never carry within him the ultimate standard of truth."[1]

Let it be clearly understood, that the men who regale us with their specious and high-sounding theories about the "religion of the spirit" and the "appeal to the religious consciousness" are bent upon destroying the authority of the Bible—this is their supreme ambition and effort. We would be willing to concede that the opinions of men, deducted however honestly from the Word of God, are subject to modification and change, but we will not admit, as they insist we shall, that the authority of the Scripture must be given up. The Scriptures, themselves, are the quickest and surest correctors of false notions about themselves and about religion. Let them stand in their appointed

[1] "The Task of the Theologian of To-day."

place of authority and judgment, and if one man blunders in their interpretation, another will soon point out his mistake. It is the fallibility of human opinion, and not the divine Revelation men need to be convinced of; but this is precisely what some do not want to admit, hence their hostility to an infallible Bible.

The Christian's conscience is the result of the Christian culture of conscience, and the Word of God as hallowed authority is the first element in the curriculum of this culture. That conscience is most truly Christian which in the whole course of its discipline and training has been most under the tutelage of the Spirit, has been taught the Bible by Him, and now most implicitly yields to its authority. The Bible is the Spirit's text-book, prepared and used by Him, and Christ the Redeemer is the subject which He teaches. The man who would have a Christian conscience must first believe that the Bible speaks a true word about Christ and on that belief yield to Him an obedient faith upon the terms which are authoritatively stipulated in the Word. The Spirit exalts Jesus infinitely. The religious spirit which this "religion of the spirit" lauds, but is impotent to produce, is itself conditioned upon surrender of self to Christ, the acceptance and enthronement of Him as Lord of life and destiny. This raises the value of conscience as religious authority; but it is shallow reasoning which even then attributes final and exclusive authority to it. Some Christian consciences

are good, some pure, some weak. Some consciences have been the greatest sinners and some experiences the greatest heresies. Some consciences restrain from evil and some allow their possessors to descend to abysses of iniquity. Some "speak lies branded in their own conscience as with a hot iron" (1 Tim. iv. 2). "To the pure all things are pure; but to them that are defiled and unbelieving nothing is pure; but both their mind and their conscience are defiled" (Titus i. 15). It is this defilement of conscience which impairs a man's power of moral discrimination for what is pure and impure, what is right and wrong, that the advocates of natural religion and the religion of the spirit take no account of. It is true that some men have died for their consciences, but it is true that some others killed them for conscience's sake. Some to satisfy their own consciences and the consciences of their gods, offer human sacrifices.

Of modern heresies none have surpassed in absurdity and irrationality those which have appealed to experience for authority. The heart has its heresies as well as the head. When weak and tempted man cuts loose from authority and commits himself, and he certainly will, to false authority, he sets adrift on a treacherous sea, strown with many wrecks and much loss both of men and precious cargo of faith. Men not only need, we repeat, the compass of conscience, but the chart of Revelation if they are to sail this sea with safety. Even then, the compass will sometimes be deranged, but the chart is un-

changeable and may serve to detect derangement in the compass.

3. Reason has a religious function; is it not sufficient to guide men into truth without supernatural revelation? Now, perhaps, the only idolatry which can survive in an age of scholarship and culture, is the deification of intellect. Pride of intellect may, as has been said, be the sin of small minds, but it is as certainly a common sin among some who would be thought the possessors of great minds. So much has been said about "pure reason," "the rights of intellect," and "the emancipation of mind," etc., some observations may be timely.

The worst may as well be said at first. Reason does not, unaided, reach the first religious goal, moral character. It has nothing in it, unaided by the divine afflatus, to vitalize the moral faculties of man. Hence some of the profoundest philosophers have been the foulest sinners and others have possessed the most sadly blunted moral sensibilities. Plato, in his Republic, advocates a community of wives and pleads for the advantages to be derived from parents not knowing their own children and the enforcement of the death penalty for the weakly and unhealthy. The vulgar lives that some of the "immortals" among ancient philosophers lived is well known. Such examples prove the inefficiency of reason to effect moral ends for the philosophers themselves. A familiar but convincing instance of what reason divorced from re-

ligious authority can do, is furnished by the history of France, and the crusade for the rights of reason. It was when the devotees of reason had repudiated Christianity and discarded Revelation that the citizens of Paris chose a woman as their "Goddess of Reason." We will take a Frenchman's description of the drama: "Clad in white garments and a sky-blue mantle, with the red cap on her head and a pike in her hand, they placed her on a fantastically ornamented car and conducted her, surrounded by crowds of bacchanalian dancers to the 'Temple of Reason,' as they were pleased to rename the Cathedral of Notre Dame. There she was seated on the high altar, and amidst profound obeisance, frantic speeches and frivolous songs, divine honour was paid her." This was a performance in the name of reason without Revelation.

While denying the infallibility of reason, Revelation does not limit the exercise of its powers. The Biblical revelation recognizes and honours reason as it is not recognized and honoured in any other religion of the world. A quotation from Christlieb states the matter admirably. "Revelation is for our theology what the telescope is for our knowledge of the stars and bears the same relation to reason and conscience as a telescope does to the naked eye. One in either case requires the other. The telescope enhances, sharpens, and extends the power of the natural eye but demands at the same time its full activity."[1]

[1] "Modern Doubt and Christian Belief," p. 133.

The Bible is not only a reasonable Book, but pays tribute to reason by appealing to it, and offering it assistance. You would not offer a telescope to a blind man nor the Bible to one denied or bereft of reason. Revelation has proved to be the best aid to reason, as the history of the human mind shows. To this fact a contrast of intellectual conditions in Christian and heathen civilizations is sufficient proof. Modern mind received its fertilization, and modern science its inspiration from Biblical and Christian sources. The discoveries and applications of modern science are absolutely confined to and controlled by those races whose reason has been supplemented, aided and stimulated by the divine revelation. Revealing the Creator, as it does, revelation has furnished a key to creation.

The writer quoted above finds a striking and beautiful illustration of how revelation supplements reason and the two are mutually serviceable, in the story of the Wise Men of the East who found the child Jesus guided by their astronomy, supplemented by Revelation. They followed the star to Jerusalem and there found those who could tell them where the Scripture said "He should be born." By the light of the prophetic revelation, they found the path to the manger. The highest office of reason is to guide men to revelation which will guide them to Christ as their teacher. Reason has its place, but also its limitations. Revelation is reason's inspiration and completion. There is no contra-

diction between them but there is dependence of the one and a transcendence of the other.

We observe again that there is no such thing as "age of reason." Every age has two classes, the learned and the unlearned and there is always more ignorance than knowledge, more unreasonableness than reasonableness. In the citizenship of intellect there are always Platos and proletariats and the Platos are always in the minority and have a proverbially smaller progeny. It is not every century that produces one, and few of them leave heirs. All men must possess adequate powers for reasoning or we must have the assistance of revelation. Otherwise we fail of religious knowledge.

Again, there is no such thing as pure reason. If there were, all the philosophers would be agreed as to what is the most reasonable hypothesis respecting ultimate truth. But, Mr. Balfour says that, "Down to our time, philosophers have not come to an agreement even as to the basis from which speculation has to proceed." Man's religious needs are too imperative for him to wait for the philosophers to decide what is the ultimate and very truth he needs. Mr. Balfour has suggested a most interesting exercise by which to determine the amount of pure reason and original thought there is in any one of our intellectual processes, namely: the subtraction from any example of lofty and advanced thinking all that the thinker has inherited, all that he has unconsciously ab-

sorbed and appropriated from others, and all that he has obtained by imitation, by habit, by instinct or impulse, and "reason's happy guess" and exhibit the remainder as a specimen of a great mind's pure and original thought! This "remainder" would probably be the means of a most wholesome humiliation and an effective antidote for the pride of intellect. Reason has its limitations and those limitations are vast and many, and most of all in the realm of religion.

Professor Kidd may be cited again in rebuttal of the arguments of the advocates of natural religion. The progress of society has been along the lines, not of the rational, but the ultra-rational. This does not mean, we may be pardoned for the superfluous remark, that religion is unreasonable, but above reason. Not the institutions of our reason, but the institutions of our religious faith and emotions, are the conspicuous and controlling aspects of our civilization. The great motive and motor power which shapes and controls the development of the social organism in any land, is religion and not reason. The church architecture of our cities is more conspicuous than our school architecture. The Bible is found in more homes than are the books of philosophers. More people know the Christian songs and are more moved by them than know or care for any or all of the intellectual sciences. There is here no belittling of these high and worthy realms of human thought, but the citation of a significant fact.

Moreover, religious impulse has done more than all else beside to kindle a love for truth, a passion to find and impart it. The thought that truth, all truth, is a heavenly treasure, its acquisition a duty, its possession a sacred stewardship, its promulgation well pleasing to God and a benediction to men, is more profoundly believed and more widely and consistently held by those who believe the Christian Revelation than any others or all others combined.

Christians have, in recent years, put more of their individual fortunes voluntarily into institutions of learning and at their personal expense dispensed more free schooling than all the world of religionist and non-religionists beside since time began. Believing that reason is insufficient for man's guidance without revelation, but that reason brought to its best by Christian help will prove the best ally of Christianity, and that revelation itself imposes the duty of improving the human mind, Christians have led the world in education. So in a manner befitting its superiority, revelation has become a helper and a teacher of reason. The effort has not been wasted, for the human mind is clearest and reason is strongest where gospel light is brightest. The intellectual achievement of the age is largely with Christianity. Those nations which are without the Revelation, still grope in the darkness of a benighted intellectualism leading a forlorn religious hope.

Where and when the Christian revelation has

done most to unlock the secrets of nature, restore a normal religious consciousness, expand the human mind and strengthen conscience, Revelation is still needed and most highly prized. Everywhere else the world lies in wickedness and darkness awaiting its healing light.

III

THE COMMON ELEMENTS IN RELIGION

THERE are those who make much of the matters which are common to all religions. In order to satisfy such, and to add weight to the great doctrines which it is our plan to set forth, we take time here for reference to these common elements of religions.

First, then, while we maintain that the constitutive and productive doctrines of Christianity are not found in any ample and credible way in any other religion, we acknowledge that there are minor and incidental phases of truth, religious and moral maxims, scattered in greater or less profusion through all the religious systems.

> "There is light in all,
> And light with more or less shade in all,
> Man-modes of worship."

These elements of truth which are common to Christianity and other religions will, of course, be permanent, but they are not the prominent and distinguishing elements in either. It would be easy to show that, besides being the sole proprietor of its fundamental doctrines, Christianity duplicates and transcends the best that is in other religions. But this does not warrant us in ignoring the smallest

element of truth found anywhere. Christianity is the last religion to justify either ignorance or the ignoring of the truth found in whatever quarter. Not a word fell from the lips of Jesus which was an embargo on truth of any sort, degree or system. The man who believes in Christ and possesses His word is, of all men, least excusable for living in error or willful ignorance. This was the watch-word of the Reformation. It was stated in Luther's dictum: "It is never safe to do anything against the truth." Christianity is the heir to all the truth, and as new light shall break from the Book, and shine into our minds from above and from the world about us, Christianity is destined to become the possessor and the dispenser of truth in increasing bounty. "Whatsoever things are true," are its rightful possession and its free gift. After attending the Parliament of Religions at Chicago, Dr. George Dana Boardman made this discriminating remark: "We often hear it said that Christianity is the only true religion, and therefore it is exclusive of all other religions. I venture to think that it is the other religions which are really exclusive; that it is the Christian religion which is really inclusive, and, therefore, that it is only the Christian religion that is adequate for mankind." [1]

The recognition of the minor elements of truth in the ethnic faiths does not at all prove or necessarily presuppose that these religions are of divine inspiration or appointment, nor for a moment raise

[1] "Life and Light," p. 108.

a question as to the rights of Christianity to become the universal religion. No logic based on the presence of these elements is sufficient to prove that these religions were even schoolmasters temporarily appointed for their respective votaries to prepare them for Christianity. The truth they contain may create a favourable condition and constitute an advantage and point of connection in missionary artifice, but do not validate the systems themselves. A more plausible genesis of these fragments of truth can be pointed out.

There are endless arguments to prove that there cannot reasonably be but one religion bearing the imprimatur of God and many to disprove the divine origin of several with their corruptions and contradiction; such arguments, for instance, as the unity of God, a unifying purpose for the race which religion necessarily contemplates, the hot antipathies which diverse religions engender, etc. If there were no other arguments, the claim of Christianity to be the absolute religion, the demands which it makes upon its disciples to make it the exclusive and universal one, and the judgment which the Bible pronounces upon all religions but its own, would certainly seem sufficient to save any Christain, at least, from falling into the delusion that Confucianism, for example, is good enough for China, Buddhism for Japan, Brahmanism for India, Mohammedanism for Arabia, Africa, etc. This question may be passed. It has commended itself to a broad but unthinking charity, which did not, as a

sound religious science requires, take account of preponderating considerations of the case, namely, the fundamental and distinguishing elements; or to state it differently, contrast religions rather than compare them. Where, then, shall we look for the sources of these common elements in other religions since essential Christianity does not allow us to attribute to the religions a divine origin and sanction, but does allow us to recognize the validity of all the truth they contain?

These vestiges of truth may, in part, have originated in the unity of the race and the identity of man's moral constitution, which this unity explains. Man is a creature with moral faculties which are the gift of the Creator, and, except as they are disabled by sin, are true and moral in expression. It is but normal for these faculties to sanction truth and right and even to originate truthful expression of moral ideas. Moral maxims may be the expression of man's religious nature, not, perhaps, perfect and complete, but true. Cicero long ago said, "This is unanswerable, that man everywhere thinks of future life as a fact." Endowed with instinct and capacity for future life, a philosophy of immortality naturally leaped from the heart of primitive man. Robert Browning, the poet-theologian, sings of this religious intuition:

> "I know He is there, as I am here,
> By the same proof, which seems no proof at all,
> It so exceeds familiar forms of proof."
> (*Hohenstiel-Schwangan.*)

> "The truth in God's breast,
> Lies trace upon trace on ours impressed:
> Though He is so bright, and we so dim,
> We are made in image to witness Him."
> (*Christmas Eve.*)

The religious creeds are evidences that God made men religious and for religion. They are what dolls are for little girls; they show instinct and capacity. Helen Keller, deaf, dumb and blind, from her babyhood, knew that there was a God before Phillips Brooks told her so when she was ten years of age. She was created with religious intuitions. God has not suffered the total extinction of these moral faculties and religious aptitudes in any nature. Says Welcke, "The divine Spirit has always been manifested in the feeling even of the most uncultivated peoples." Dr. James Freeman Clarke says of that most unlikely specimen, the wild child of the Arabian desert, "The Arab has also a sense of spiritual things which appears to have a root in his organization." It is this religiousness of human nature that impostors have taken advantage of. Decoran says, "Every child is born into the religion of nature; its parents make it a Jew, a Christian, or a Magian." It was Mohammed's keen eye for this human instinct for religion which made this colossal impostor a success in his business. There are several very modern examples of a like discernment. It is this natural religiousness which accounts for some, at least, of the correspondences in all re-

ligions. Men are religious in response to the laws of their nature, and sectarian in conformity to their training.

And this psychological fact sets up a most convincing circumstantial evidence for the claim of Revelation, namely, that God "made of one every nation of men to dwell on all the face of the earth. . . . That they should seek God —if haply they might feel after Him and find Him" (Acts xvii. 27). "And the man called his wife's name Eve; because she was the mother of all living" (Gen. iii. 20). The ancestral line runs through succeeding generations until the flood reduces the race to a remnant and then, "God blessed Noah and his sons and said unto them, be fruitful and multiply and replenish the earth." Down to the enlightened time of the Augustan Age, the genealogies are kept and known and given in the Scriptures running through generations of those who were the sons of others, who were the sons of Adam, "The son of God who was" (Luke iii. 23–28). This is the lineage of us all. Paul said to Jew and Greek alike, "We are also His offspring" (Acts xvii. 28).

There are many historical facts to support the view that there still survives among all the great nations some of the traditions of the early religious history and vestiges of original precepts taught them in the race's infancy. The doctrines which explain facts and forms seem to have dropped out of mind but some incidents and observances re-

main. The race originated with God and He had much dealing with it while it was young. It was schooled of Him in some fundamental religious ideas long before there was a heathen nation or religion. The flood was brought on by an apostasy. The Ten Commandments were the law of the antenoachian times, though afterwards written in stone for Moses. The third commandment, for example, was instituted in celebration of creation so that man might begin his career religiously.

Every great religion has its sacred seventh day, a remnant of the ancient statutes. It is conceded by students in comparative religion that a monotheism lay behind the most ancient polytheism. One of the most distant voices that speak to us from the far past is Zenophanes, six centuries before Christ. "There is one God supreme over all gods, diviner than mortals."[1] Harnack quotes St. Augustine as follows: "Be it known, Faustus, or those rather who are charmed by his productions, that our doctrine of divine monarchy is not borrowed from the heathen but that on the other hand the heathen themselves had not so wholly lapsed into the worship of false gods as to relinquish all belief in one True God." Dr. James Freeman Clarke illustrates "how the wrecks of old beliefs come drifting down the stream of time bound in those frail canoes which men call words," by pointing the similarity of the words which in different languages designate the Supreme Deity. In Sanscrit

[1] "Supernatural Religion," Vol. I, p. 76.

it is Div; in Greek, Dios; Latin, Deus; French, Dieu; and English, Divinity. Certainly nothing but a common source can account for this. Dr. Augustus H. Strong says in his essay on Homer: "We are persuaded that the sacrificial languages of the 'Iliad' and the 'Odyssey' can never be explained except by supposing that it is the relic of an age when the race had a better understanding of God and of Sin."[1] There are, in all the great systems of religion, perhaps without exception, varying accounts of the flood, which, while partial and always lacking the rational excellence of the Biblical account, show that these religions have inherited this knowledge of that awful catastrophe from a remote past and probably a common source. No race has entirely gotten away from the dictates of the laws of God written in our members; and some traditions of that early school in which God was teacher of His own law remain with all.

Moreover, it grows more probable with investigation and increase of knowledge that the Pentateuch is the oldest religious classic, and so the original source of these stories. A complete cataloguing of the facts would show preponderating historical proof that the original religion was a pure one which suffered deterioration and not a fetishism which has improved by evolution.

The Bible gives us the origin of dissimilar languages. Before the flood "The whole earth was of one language and of one speech" (Gen. xi. 1). The

[1] "The Great Poets and Their Theology," p. 52.

builders of the Babel displeased God, and as a penalty and in order to facilitate His plans for separate nations to possess the earth, He miraculously gave the respective tribes various tongues. The place of their sin was "called Babel; because Jehovah did there confound the language of all the earth" (Gen. xi. 9).

This narrative in Genesis also gives us the origin of nations. Just prior to the confusion of speech there was division of the people into respective family groups of the three sons of Noah,—Shem, Ham and Japheth. This division was also, according to the varying shades of colour and complexion, represented respectively by these three sons and their descendants. It is a well-known fact that in ancient times proper names had adjectival significance. Accordingly Shem means "name," "the man of name or renown,"[1] in whose line was Abraham and Christ and in whose language the Old Testament was written, thus justifying the name. The Hebrews are his racial descendants. Japheth signifies "fair," referring more especially to the "fairness of complexion," "father of fair descendants, and of those who spread abroad,"[2] referring to Grecian, Teutonic, and Anglo-Saxon people. Ham is "black" or "sunburnt," and he was the father of the Negro race, although he was a brother of the Hebrew and Anglo-Saxon forefathers, Shem and Japheth.

Not only were these divisions made according to

[1] Fausset. [2] *Ibid.*

colour, but the territorial distribution of the several groups as made favour the preservation and even the increasing distinction of these shades of colour. The descendants of Shem, the ancestor of the Jews, were settled in "Mesha . . . unto Sephar," that is in Western Asia; to those of Japheth, progenitor of the white races, were "the isles of the Gentiles divided," and they were to "spread abroad," a prophecy of their expansion towards the west into Europe, America, and Australia; to the tribes descending from Ham was assigned territory "in the land of Shinar," which was to the south and embraced lands in Africa, Egypt, and Ethiopia.

Thus it will be seen according to the Biblical distribution, the white man in the north, the black man in the south, and the Hebrews in an intermediate geographical position, the climate for each was favourable for the preservation of the complexional distinctions. Given these three types of complexion and varieties of climates and we can, by a most rational theory, account for all the intermediate shades of skin known to us. The intermarriages, migrations, and consequent changes wrought in course of time by peculiarities of climate is the most reasonable and least artificial explanation yet proposed of facts as we find them. If facts are explained thus, their explanation ought not to be discounted simply because it is found to harmonize with Scripture. "Written more than 3,000 years ago, the genealogical account in Genesis x. is the oldest and

most trustworthy history of the dispersion of mankind."

The manner in which ethnological and philological science corroborate this Biblical account is very remarkable confirmation of the Scriptures. These facts relevant to these respective branches of science have been treated by many competent scholars, and while they do not agree in detail, there is sufficient agreement on essential points to constitute remarkable testimony. Good authority claims that the Biblical account of racial linguistic lines issuing and diverging from the plains of Mesopotamia have been found to meet and harmonize with the converging lines of ethnological and philological science which modern scholars have been able patiently to trace backwards from our times to that remote past when nations and languages had their origin. Meanwhile, ethnologists and philologists are still working at their uncompleted task, and may yet as with one voice corroborate the Scripture. The physiological and psychological evidence is conclusive.

These facts which may seem to be exceedingly dry to some, and impractical as well, nevertheless have a significance and a pertinence to this discussion. Nature is older than nations, and, while there are different nations and a diversity of speech, human nature is one in origin and fundamentally a unit. It is, therefore, but reasonable to account for some, at least, of the correspondences found in the separate religions of the nations upon this

ground of common origin and unity. The common likeness of soul which survived the division of the race and the origin of diverse speech forces aspirations into expression, which, when rightly interpreted, is found to have something common to all. All originated with God and the intuitions and needs of men of every land and speech cry out for God, if haply He may be found; and a cry is the common language of the world. Surely we should expect to find some common notes when men of common natures and common religions needs raise their plaintive cry for light and religious satisfaction. The difference is, that some men have accepted the Revelation, which is our heavenly Father's answer to this cry, and others have not. While the latter still possess some remnants of their unsquandered patrimony of truth, some tatters of the early garment of religion, received in the infancy of the race before as prodigals they left their father's house, they are still in want and their hearts call back from the country into which they willfully wandered. They are in rags soiled by sin, and feed on husks of superstition, myth and fable and shall suffer want until they return to their father's house.

It is a fact clearly proven by competent investigators that nearly all of the ethnic faiths either unconsciously inherited or deliberately plagiarized many things from the true and revealed religion, and, in all cases, have by contact received marked impressions from it, as well as from one another.

This applies both to their fragmentary content of truth and the practice of some common virtues by their votaries. A familiar example of the first is that of the unity of the Godhead insisted upon in the Koran. This great truth was not a revelation to the Impostor but a deliberate piracy; indeed it was, according to Sale and others, written into his creed by an apostate Jew and Christian, who were the literary composers and amanuenses of this illiterate deceiver. It has been thought that the reverence for parents so characteristic of Confucianism is an inheritance from a remote ancestry which knew the law embodied in the sixth commandment.

The Semitic invasions of Egypt at a very primitive period may be taken as an early example of how the original stock of pure religious ideas was distributed, and while becoming corrupted, left some surviving remnants. Buddhism was profoundly affected by early Christianity before the present Buddhistic literature was produced, and it shows signs of this in such matters as its fake incarnations. Judaism was historic before Buddha was born. The prophet Daniel, Confucias, Buddha, Pythagoras and Socrates probably all lived within a period of one hundred years, and this when Hebrew religion was old and the composition of the Old Testament Scriptures was drawing to a close. Buddhism was modified in time by Judaism and Christianity as it modified and was in turn modified by Brahmanism, against which it was a revolt. Modern history is giving examples of this

sort of process in Shintoism, Confucianism, and Buddhism in Japan, and of Christianity and Buddhism in the Brahmo-Somaj in India. There is strong evidence to the effect that the life of Gautama, the Buddha, was written subsequent to and in the light and imitation of the life of Christ contained in the Gospels. The legend of miraculous birth, the story of his temptation and his presentation in the temple are not found in the original accounts and are palpable forgeries.[1] Modern Buddhism is not only unlike early Buddhism but in India, for instance, is unlike itself in Japan. By appropriation and compromise it has lost much of its original identity in every land in which it has made conquest, and has become a composite of religion, ethical systems and philosophies. In Japan it is a triplicate of Buddhism, Shintoism and Confucianism and there are no devotees to pure Buddhism.

The fact that some barnacles of heathenism are found attached to certain societies in Christendom, does not invalidate this argument but illustrates the historical truth and helps us to understand how heathen religions have come to possess things common to them and Christianity. Roman Catholicism bears many visible marks of its contact with heathenism. So far as history takes us back, there is not one great religion, or system that stands instead of religion, which did not grow out of some previous system, Judaism excepted.

[1] See Lorimer's "The Argument for Christianity," pp. 421–422.

The case is not made out for Judaism and there is little promise that it will be.

One fact which has never received its proportion of attention may be cited here. Not one of the surviving older ethnic religions was at the beginning distinctly a religion at all, and to them in our day there is attached a religious significance which their history and the contents of their "sacred" books do not warrant. Mohammedanism may be left out of this count, for it grew out of the joint system of Judaism and Christianity. But Confucianism and Brahmanism, Buddhism and the rest, were certainly not originally and are scarcely now distinctly religious systems. Ancient Egypt, perhaps, represented the only distinct religious system among primitive peoples, outside the Hebrew race, and the original Egyptian faith has perished. The others were the collected philosophical speculations of the ancients who intermeddled with religious matters, as philosophers do. Even in our land and time, much which passes for higher religious thought is philosophy meddling with religion. These speculations about religion came gradually to stand instead of religion and to receive in a degree religious homage. But they lacked and still lack many essentials of a religion, as all philosophy does. People blunder when they mistake philosophers for true religious teachers. Brahmanism was, at first, and is yet, distinctly, a transcendental and metaphysical philosophy. Of a personal God, the starting point and the primal element of religion,

Brahmanism knew nothing. This philosophy like all transcendentalism lost itself in vagaries. How to etherialize one's self and reach absorption in impersonal infinity was its task. Buddhism, an attempted reformation of Brahmanism, arising at a later day had somewhat more of human interest, but it was a philosophy without a God. It was atheistic, its god being intellect, its goal perfect wisdom and the extinction of desire, its task how to get rid of physical pain. God is but sublimated man. Gautama, by intellectual emancipation, became Buddha, God, and the present devotee hopes to become Buddha. Maurice characterized Buddhism as, "Deistic, Atheistic, Pantheistic, Human Doctrine." He also says that, "The one infallible diagnostic of Buddhism is belief in the infinite capacity of the human intellect. It has been working out its results for all these thousand years,—and what have they been? The worship of the intellect has not caused intellect to grow. That mighty portion of the globe over which Buddhism rules is nearly the most ignorant portion of it."[1]

The worship of the intellect does not increase intelligence. In point of intellectual light, and we select Buddhism's strong point, the difference between Buddhistic and Christian civilization is the difference between starlight and daylight. This philosophy more and more assumed the rôle of religion, and finally came into competition with Christian theology.

[1] "Religions of the World," p. 84.

Philosophy is always competing with theology. Confucianism was solely a domestic, social, and economic science. Confucius positively disclaimed any knowledge of God, without which no man could establish a religion. In the presence of three philosophical systems China is without a religion. But these philosophies contain many axiomatic religious truths, which have been inherited and acquired from many sources. But the most precious pearls of truth which these systems contain and which in our day are pointed out by their liberal admirers, first and still adorn the divine Revelation and are here displayed in a fairer setting.

Men have gained some religious ideas from material nature and natural law. Here is a volume open to all who are endowed with reason. The ancients, who lived closer to the heart of nature than we moderns do, were especially close observers of nature. Men early looked with wild-eyed wonder upon the luna changes, the constellations of the heavens and the great objects and forces of nature. At first, awe was on them, which deepened into worship, and men bowed in reverence before sun, or moon or mountain. But gradually more discriminating and reflective minds began to see truer religious significance in nature. They saw in the divine orderliness of nature evidence of intelligence back of this wondrous mechanism and panorama. The benevolent adaptations of vegetable and animal life to human need,

the strength and glory of mountain and sea, the peaceful and harmonious march of the planets, the regular recurrence of the seasons—these all proved existence somewhere of an author and superintendent, possessed of superhuman intelligence and might. Day unto day uttered speech and night unto night showed knowledge. Astrology was perhaps the first of the sciences to engage the human mind. The stars looked down so brightly and smiled so radiantly in those clear Eastern skies as to charm man and to call for an explanation of their creation and glory. There was evidence of intelligence and power, though the heart was made sick for a satisfying assurance of God's love, mercy and forgiveness of transgressors.

What they found cannot with appropriateness be called a revelation. They saw rather a display of law and evidence of intelligence. When they had gone a little further with their observations, they discovered that even physical laws were meting out penalties upon the immoral, that is to say the transgressor of these laws. Nature did not even hint at a redemption for him who had broken law. The forebodings of conscience were, moreover, now corroborated by nature's retributions. Violations of moral law entailed physical consequences and the demonstration was before their eyes. "God manifested it unto them, for the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived

through the things that are made, even His everlasting power and divinity" (Rom. xviii. 19). Of *power* and *divinity* they had proof. Nature in them and about them furnished evidence of this, but of the love and heart of God nature was dumb. The power manifested in nature operated on moral lines identical with those inner promptings and warnings of their consciences.

So men were from the first beset by law. These various religions, therefore, tell us much about law but nothing about gospel. In some of them the unerring judgments which natural law has from the beginning been grinding out, has produced a pessimism and a fatalism. Buddhism is an example of this. Nature displays law; Revelation contains doctrine. Doctrine is the divine explanation or interpretation of important facts and mysteries. The ancients had their religious natures greatly aroused by the objects and forces of nature, but they got only partial and superficial religious ideas from them, lacking a revelation as a key to nature.

At what conclusions have we now arrived? We have sought to point out the most rational ground upon which we may account for that truth in heathen religions which all good men are willing to recognize. The reasonable sources we have seen are the identical moral constitutions of men, due to a common origin, that is from God, the source of moral right and truth; the remnants of original religious instruction still remaining in the possession of all; the influence which religions

mutually exert over one another; and religious deductions from nature. Beyond these we do not believe that heathen religions go in their content of true religious ideas. That is to say, one does not have to go beyond natural causes to find the most reasonable ground upon which to account for whatever truth he may find in any other religion beside Christianity and Judaism. On the other hand, the Christian Revelation is not something which men have obtained or attained but something communicated by the Spirit. It is not human wisdom or knowledge, but religious doctrine. Christianity is not mythology, that is an issue of the imagination; not philosophy, a product of human reason; not invention, a thing wrought out after a human scheme or stumbled upon by chance; nor an evolution, something grown out of something else by the natural laws of human progress; not a human achievement, and, therefore, a human boast: it is a supernatural religion—*the* religion of salvation.

But the plight of the heathen is something worse than yet appears. By a long dwelling in the darkness of sin, their moral powers have been enfeebled and their spiritual eyes well-nigh blinded, so that they cannot make the best use of the fragments of knowledge within their reach as inadequate as they are. They can no longer discern and set forth even so good a protraiture as might, for instance, be drawn from nature. The picture of God, to name at once the fatal defect, is but a caricature in what-

ever faith you find it. In all save Mohammedanism, it is either a filmy, shadowy, formless, unreality without profile or contour, or else a celestialized man, who is, we may remark, without historical verification; or again, as in Mohammedanism, God is a monster.

"What then is the nature of these points of contact? I answer: they are for the most part, not discoverable in the genuine dogmas of a revealed religion."[1] The resemblances, and the best is never more than this, have to do with the incidental, while the differences and the contradictions concern the fundamental matters of religion. Being without a revelation, these creeds are, for the most part, made up of a medley of religious intuitions, crude scientific observations, obsolete speculations of philosophers, and fragments of mythology. Of necessity, they do not present a *system* of religious truth, but a bewildering hodge-podge, interesting but fruitless. The sacred books of the Hindu disagree, one part with another, and one book with another, as radically as they do with the Bible and that on the very things which they represent to be the fundamental basis of the Hindu faith.[2]

If we except Mohammedanism, and it is not plain that this is necessary, there is not in any of them anything which can be appropriately called *doctrine*, nothing, for instance, corresponding with the great constructive and vitalizing doctrines of the Atone-

[1] Hardwick in "Christ and Other Masters," p. 213.

[2] See "Great Religions of the World," p. 82.

ment, Regeneration, etc., so luminously set forth in the Holy Scriptures. Doctrines are not intellectual abstractions, nor philosophical speculations. They are even more than truth or a sound but cold, moral philosophy. "The words that I have spoken unto you, are spirit, and are life" (John vi. 63). Doctrine is the vital and cohesive principle in the Scriptures which bind all the history and ethics together and denotes where their moral potentiality is lodged.

> "Who of the living seeks to know and tell,
> Strives first the living spirit to expel;
> He has in hand the separate parts alone,
> But lacks the spirit-bond which makes them one."

Bishop Westcott rightly defines a doctrine as an "inexhaustible spring of strength." Doctrines embody vital forces and act on the motor centres of man's moral nature. They excite spiritual emotions, beget spiritual experiences, inspire holy living and impel to active and unselfish service. The Oriental faiths, being as they are evolutions of philosophy, preserve the true characteristics of philosophy by avoiding obvious definition, and mutually setting forth irreconcilable contradictions. The profoundest scholars and lifelong students of ethnic faiths have not been able to reduce their contents to consistency or specific dogmas. Speaking of Brahmanism, Dr. A. C. Lyal says, "It is founded on somewhat vague philosophy and embraces schools of thought, accepts different theories

as to the divine nature. It has no dogmatic rulings upon such questions as are settled by Christian and Mohammedan creeds. . . . Hinduism and even Buddhism has never succeeded in so limiting and clearly stating of faith and morals as to lay down and impress them upon the people at large, for their practical guidance in life. They have nothing, for instance, like our Ten Commandments or the Lord's Prayer, which order our lives and direct our consciences."[1] Those things in them which may be considered to be their fundamentals and necessary to their identity and distinctiveness are not only unlike but radically opposed to the essential doctrines of Christianity, while the things which are common to them and Christianity do not in any instance embrace the saving principles of the gospel and are, therefore, negligible when we come to consider the missionary duty of Christianity to the people of these faiths.

Strip Christianity of the minor elements which it holds in common with other religions and it will be Christianity still by virtue of its peculiar doctrines: strip any heathen religion of the vesture of truth common to Christianity which it wears, and it will be a more repulsive heathenism for it. The distinctive Christian doctrines are those which produce the Christian experiences and give glory to the Christian system. Not only are the common elements minor as compared to the distinctive elements of the heathen faith, but these minor truths

[1] "Great Religions of the World," pp. 102–103.

are so preponderated by a mass of error, often puerile and grotesque, and not infrequently positively dangerous and vile, and so separated from their source, and so long associated with error and evil that even these have not their proper power and influence.

The latitudinarian view which is held in some quarters and which some pseudo-Christians are trying to popularize, viz., that Hinduism, for instance, is better adapted to the people of India than Christianity, indeed, that it is a gentle brother in the great religious family to whom due respect should be shown and a non-missionary attitude assumed, betrays alike ignorance of human nature, the nature of religion in general, and the fundamental matters and significance of both Hinduism and Christianity in particular, and, withal, a callous disregard for Christ's authority. No consistent and devoted heathen or Christian ever thought of such an attitude. Perhaps, nothing conveys a better idea of the utterly unrelated and unassimilable nature of heathenism and Christianity than the hot fury with which the first set upon the latter at its beginning and the burning zeal with which the early Christians laboured to save the world from its religions. That religion which is true must at last triumphantly hold all the field strown with every religious error.

IV

IS ONE RELIGION FOR ALL MEN A REASONABLE HOPE?

OF all disagreements among men to-day religious differences are the saddest. Personal disputes between believers are unfortunate, antagonisms among evangelical Christian sects are deplorable, the radical divergence of Protestant and Roman Catholic belief is calamitous, and the most pitiful sight our heavenly Father looks upon is the absolute separateness of the races into national and territorial religions at once dissimilar and discordant, immiscible and hostile..

The best service now to be rendered humanity is to point it to a complete and universal system of religious truth, the common birthright of men. The greatest problem that remains for the human intellect to deal with and for future generations to settle is that of one religion for all races of men. Busy with rocks, plants and stars hitherto, men have given grudging thought to this question. God's call, "Come let us reason together," has fallen on preëngaged ears, and man's irresponsiveness has wrung from God the accusation, "My people doth not consider." But happily the great question is now more and more engaging the attention of the great minds and impressing them with

its importance. Thoughtful men are coming to agree with Carlyle, that "A man's religion is the most important thing about him," and those who are unselfishly interested in mankind are also becoming interested in religion. Dr. Morris Jastrow says in his remarkable book, "The Study of Religion": "The study of religion has taken its place among contemporary sciences and the importance of the study can be denied by no one who appreciates the part religion has played in the history of mankind, and still plays at the present time."[1] Goethe not only speaks for the truth, but for the minds of his class when he affirms that, "The real and the deepest theme of the world's and man's history, to which all other subjects are subordinate, is the conflict between the faith and unbelief."

This supreme subject must, after a while, receive first attention. Impelled by manifold spirit of progress in the world, men, "in the foremost files of time," have been brought face to face with this question of religion and made to think on it. And the times are preparing conditions which will force to an issue the question of the true and the false and of the rightful dominion of that which stands the test of thought and investigation. "The battle of centuries between belief and unbelief is in our days nearly tending to the point where the decisive question must be put."[2]

[1] "The Study of Religion," p. 7.

[2] Christlieb, "Modern Doubt and Christian Belief," p. 136.

1. The intellectual progress of the human race forces a settlement of the religious problem. All men who think truly on any subject, think towards one another and contribute to synthetic knowledge. One religion for all men is the focal point of all religious thought. Two thousand years ago Christianity took the initiative in the enterprise to synthesize all true religious belief and bring all men to one religious faith. The words of a recent philosopher show that the philosophic spirit is in harmony with the gospel and the best sentiment of our times. "The unification of all belief into an ordered whole, compacted into one coherent structure under the stress of reason, is an ideal which we can never abandon."[1] As men acquire mental strength and gain intellectual scope, they turn from the small questions to the large, from general familiarity to particular knowledge.

> "I doubt not thro' the ages one increasing
> purpose runs
> And the thoughts of men are widened
> with the process of the sun."
> (*Tennyson.*)

And this forecasts that religion and not any natural science shall most engage the great thinkers of the future; for, as a problem for the mind, the spiritual is more subtle than the material, the supernatural is profounder than the natural, the

[1] Balfour's "Foundations of Belief," p. 241.

eternal is loftier than the temporal and the science of God and soul is a nobler science than that of matter and force. The eloquent words with which Tyndall closed his famous Belfast Address sounds a true note of prophecy: It "will assuredly be handled by the loftiest minds when you and I like streaks of morning cloud shall have melted into the infinite azure of the past."[1]

In the future indifference to the religious question or the missionary problem will be attributed to intellectual puerility if not imbecility. Reviewing "Some Elements of Religion," Canon Liddon says: "Not to be interested in the life of Jesus is to be I do not say irreligious, but unintelligent." Great minds deal with great questions. Hereafter the men with the greatest minds will be the most enthusiastic religionists. "Theology is the queen of sciences" and "offers opportunity to the utmost powers of man."[2] Attainments in other sciences will carry men up to this and will require of the devotee of the sciences a knowledge of religion to which they stand as stepping stones in the intellectual ascent. The sociologist, the psychologist, the ethnologist, the philologist and the biologist all find that their sciences cross and are penetrated by the religious question, and they cannot know them fully without a knowledge of religion. Men will be compelled, if not persuaded, to take up this branch of human

[1] "Fragments of Science," p. 214.

[2] Clark's "Outline of Christian Theology," p. 53.

learning. If in their intellectual pride they will not take it up as a purely religious question, they will, to guarantee their scholarship, be compelled to recognize it and ponder it as something essential to a rounded scheme of philosophy. This is the significance of the "chairs" of moral philosophy and more particularly of "comparative religions" already established in the chief universities.

Religion is proprietor of a certain class of facts which must be included in the final synthesis of knowledge and into these facts theology penetrates more deeply than any other science. Without agreeing with Herbert Spencer as to what he takes to be the *fact* of religion, we may quote this lofty-minded man again as a witness that religion is of such significance that it cannot be ignored by the thoughtful. He says: "An unbiased consideration of its general respects forces us to conclude that religion, everywhere present as a weft running through the warp of human history, expresses some eternal fact."[1] Mr. Spencer gives this definition of philosophy: "Philosophy is completely unified knowledge." These "eternal facts" must surely be included in this unification. And he specifies theological, physical and ethical divisions of this synthesis.[2] Not only does Mr. Spencer recognize religion as an essential element in unified knowledge, but he recognizes progress towards its inclusion in the best scheme of human thought. "The progress of intelligence has throughout been dual. Though

[1] "First Principles," p. 16. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 111.

it has not seemed so to those who made it. Every step in advance has been a step towards both the natural and the supernatural." [1]

And yet science and philosophy forever fall short of the heart and secret of religion. The one may deal with religious archæology, the other with intellectual propositions but cannot reach the vital creative thing itself.

Philosophy is the advance grade in the curriculum of the present intellectual culture; but the frontiers of philosophy touch the borders of the religious question as science touches the borders of philosophy. The boundary between them is incurved like the boundary between the lands of a continent and the waters of an ocean, with a cape or a shoal jutting out here, and a bay or an inlet running in there. They penetrate each other's borders at certain points as science and philosophy dovetail each other; like the interpenetrations of arithmetic, algebra and geometry. Indeed, the edges of all sciences are serrated. No science is a cube. There are certain marginal religious questions which are within the perview of the philosopher and are amenable to philosophic inquiry. But at last, philosophy reaches a terminal point in the direction of religion beyond which it cannot go without new appliances, even as the longest cape ends at last in the deep sea, where land travel ends and sea travel must begin if there is farther progress. The capes of philosophy run far out into the ocean of theology,

[1] "First Principles," p. 88.

and no man can ever be a thorough philosopher, and philosophy can never become a finished system until the truth is known concerning these questions which lie wrapped within the mystery of religion. The foot-paths of philosophy lead only to the water's edge, but the sand-bars of philosophy extend out into the deepening tide of religious mystery.

Henry Drummond, in speaking of the geologist and the Mosaic Genesis, says, "Men could find out the order in which the world was made. What they could not find out was that God made it. To this day they have not found out."[1] And yet the mind is inquisitive until it does find out. The philosophers have, without exception, been great meddlers with religion. Somehow, like children, they have loved to play in the lapping waters of the religious tide while yet refusing to make an experiment at swimming or take boat and theological pilot for sail on the great, deep waters. A catalogue of the dissertations upon religion by the philosophers would fill a library. There is not one of them which has not written a book or a chapter dealing with religion; and yet they have not "found out" God. That is the theologian's task—no, the Christian's privilege and experience, which the philosopher cannot know without the Christian's equipment. And yet, who will say that the mystery of this world is solved by the man who is ignorant of the Creator of its matter and the Author of its laws?

[1] "Life of Drummond," by George Adam Smith, p. 262.

Tyndall will be to some an unexpected corroborator of Drummond: "While thus making the largest demand for freedom of investigation—while I consider science to be alike powerful as an instrument of intellectual culture and as a ministrant of the material wants of men; if you ask me whether it has solved, or is likely in our day to solve, the problem of this universe, I must shake my head in doubt. You remember the first Napoleon's question, when the *Savans* who accompanied him to Egypt discussed in his presence the origin of the universe and solved it to their own apparent satisfaction. He looked aloft at the starry heavens and said: 'It is all very well, gentlemen; but who made these?' That question still remains unanswered, and science makes no attempt to answer it. As far as I can see there is no quality in the human intellect which is fit to be applied to the solution of the problem. It entirely transcends us. The mind of man may be compared to a musical instrument with a certain range of notes, beyond which in both directions we have an infinitude of silence. The phenomena of matter and force lie within our intellectual range, and as far as they reach we will at all hazards push our inquiries. But behind and above and around all, the real mystery of this universe lies unsolved, and as far as we are concerned, is incapable of solution. Fashion this mystery as you will; with that I have nothing to do. But let your conception of it not be an unworthy one. Invest that conception with

your highest and holiest thought," etc.[1] He faced the ocean but lacked equipment to embark.

The scientist and the philosopher alike confess that they "cannot by searching find out God." And still the essential element of their problem of the universe is God, and the most excruciating agony they know is the desire to find Him. Therefore, it must inevitably come to pass that men will be driven to investigate the accessible approaches to God. Their devotion to philosophy and their craving for highest knowledge will take them beyond their depth and they will be compelled to call to their assistance the help which religion provides. The solution of the riddle of the universe which man has undertaken is so locked up with divine Cause, religious facts and spiritual phenomena, that he must investigate the religious question. Of course, he will do this with scientific thoroughness and by a rational method—the experimental. This is wherein the intellectual progress of the world is leading to a consideration of the question of one religion for all men.

2. One religion for all men is necessary to social progress. The religion of any people is invariably a chief promoter of social advancement or the principal hindrance to it, and social conditions are everywhere determined by religion chiefly. Prof. Benjamin Kidd has, perhaps, traced the laws which govern social progress with closer precision than any other, and he finds that religion has been

[1] "Fragments of Science," pp. 79–80.

and is the controlling factor in shaping human society. Reviewing the wonders of metropolitan, industrial and commercial life, with modern institutions, political and social customs, and the varied activities of our civilization, he points to churches, temples, cathedrals and the crowds that frequent them, the doctrines there preached, presenting the religions of mankind, and remarks upon these last that they undoubtedly constitute "one of the most persistent and characteristic features of human society, not only in past ages but at the present day." He says that, "The history of our Western civilization is largely but the life-history of a peculiar form of religion and deep-rooted social movements connected therewith." He tells us that we are in reality living in the midst of a civilization where the habits, customs, laws and institutions of the people are influenced in almost every detail by religion, and even those who profess to repudiate the teachings of religion are almost as directly affected as other sections of the community, and whatever their private opinion may be, they are quite powerless to escape the influence of the prevailing tone and the developmental tendencies of society in which they live. "In the religious beliefs of mankind we have . . . the characteristic feature of our social evolution." Again, "Everywhere these beliefs are associated with conduct having a social significance." The most original and thoughtful part of Professor Kidd's remarkable book is that which contends that the social develop-

ment of the race has been carried on not by achievements of reason, but by the subordination of reason to religious authority. "The motive power in this struggle has undoubtedly been supplied by his many religious beliefs."[1] Professor Hyde says that, "Religion is the largest aspect, the universal form of our social relationship."[2] "The history of the world," says Principal Wace, "would appear to be in a great measure a history of the manner in which religious ideas, often of an apparently abstract and subtle character, can determine the future of whole races and vast regions of the earth."[3]

A convincing truth of all this is found in the fact that every great religion has produced its own peculiar cast of society. No amount of wealth or culture can be made to separate one class of men and women from another so entirely in their social intercourse and customs as different religions—as a Chinaman's religion, for instance, separates him socially from the Englishman and vice versa. Their respective religions have directly produced their social habits and forms, and wherever these religions extend, the same social life characterizes their respective devotees, modified only as religion is modified or modifies it. No religion is simply an organization, but as an organizer, and the great religions organize on a gigantic scale.

A common religion for mankind is then required

[1] See Kidd's "Social Evolution," Chap. 5.

[2] "Outline of Social Theology."

[3] "Foundations of Faith," pp. 198–199.

to facilitate and assure progress towards social unity. All matters which divide men have their roots in the religious question. The strifes of men are set in religious principles, either in the lack of the true or the exposition of the false. The bloodiest wars that have stained the pages of human history have been incited by religious antipathies. The most diabolical inhumanities that have delacerated society have been perpetrated under the frenzy of religious bigotry and fanaticism. Of all feuds between nations, classes and communities none have been quite so fierce as those whose fires were fed by religious prejudice and jealousy. No cruelty is quite equal to religious persecution. No hate is so deep, no hostility so unrelenting, no quarrel so interminable as that in which religious differences are involved. Wherever the home, whatever the colour of its skin or the kind of language spoken, the other nation is "heathen" if it have not our religion. In nothing else is another nation so execrable as in its religion; not even its vices are quite so hateful as its creed. Primarily more effort is made to convert others from their religion than from their sins.

But while the different religions are the chief causes of social disunion and the most unsurmountable obstacles to amicable social relations, a noble religion is, on the other hand, the strongest bond of unity and fraternity between men, and the most effective equalizer. There is no tie between different families, classes and races of men so

strong, so genuine and so enduring as that of a common and genuine religious faith, hope and work. So long as there are religions there can be no perfect society. Universal human fraternity is an impossible dream without a common religion for all races of men; and yet such a fraternity is a dream which will be cherished till it is fulfilled. Lofty souls there will always be who plan and labour, plead and long, pray and look for a social fraternity, a human brotherhood until it is realized. Towards this realization the common children of one heavenly Father, with a common destiny, are painfully, slowly but surely finding their way, led by a few single-hearted seers. Says James Freeman Clark: "In fact the growing interest of human beings in each other is one of the most striking marks of civilization."[1] To hasten the day of the ideal social fellowship is the task of the new science of sociology, and its success in accomplishing it depends upon the recognition it gives to religion as a hindrance and a help; for nothing can help it so much as religion and nothing is so inimical to it as religion.

Social purity as well as social unity is a necessary achievement, and it is promoted chiefly by religion. So progress towards this goal requires the selection of one religion—the best of them all. The moral code of society, its esthetic ideals, personal and domestic purity, the modesty and purity of the home, the value and sanctity of human life, the

[1] Clark's "Ten Great Religions," Vol. II, p. 39.

rights of woman and the security of childhood are matters of social morality involved in the religious question. A religion is an aggregation of ethical beliefs. Such are these that they become the source and motors of individual daily actions and of social morality. Bishop Wescott expresses the conclusions of philosophy and broad observation when he says that, "Conduct in the long run corresponds with belief" and "patient investigation will show that no doctrine can be without a bearing on action. . . . The influence of dogma will be good or bad. . . . Every religion and every sect of religion, has its characteristic form of life."[1]

The logical and psychological order of a social reformation is first a reformation of religious beliefs, then the reformation of the individual and society. It was tutoring in heathen religion which fattened Rome in voluptuous iniquity for national slaughter, and which led Pliny to proclaim that suicide was the best gift that the gods had ever given to men, as it was the despair of infidelity that made the famous Frenchman the arch-apostle of the same nefarious ethics and multiplied this sullen sin among one of the naturally happiest nations in the world. Seneca tells us that there were women in Rome who counted their ages by the number of husbands they had married, a fame only eclipsed by men in heathen India to-day who have more wives than they have had birthdays. Against the social life of other religions, Christianity was early set in

[1] "The Gospel of Life," pp. 48–57.

contrast. It indicated the superlative superiority of Christian social life and the white purity of the Christian domestic life in contrast with that which surrounded it when the pagan sophist, Libanius, exclaimed: "What women these Christians have!" Those women were made by the Christian religion out of heathen material. The state of society in India and China to-day is a religious product, and the social casts, discriminations and debasements are expositions of the religious creeds of these nations and can never be changed until their religions are changed—exchanged. More zeal is consumed in the effort to convert them from their religions than from their vices because their vices flourish on their religions. America's social life is mainly a product of America's prevailing religion, though a product in process of making. Let Christianity have its way with all that is unchristlike in "low society" and "high society" and what we have to-day is but "a stammering which to-morrow will be speech, and the day after to-morrow will be gospel," "known and read of all men."

This social progress so profoundly affected and so certainly determined by religion, includes even the most material aspects of our civilization. "Labour," "industry," "commerce," "politics," are words which represent what are commonly supposed to be the most purely secular phases of life. Furthermore, because of their immediate temporal character, they engage a lively and popular interest. The evils which beset these

phases of modern life, the problems which they raise for solution and the necessity for that solution are readily recognized. There is scarcely a sheet of paper printed that does not deliver an opinion on these "live questions." Progress towards right and righteous adjustment of these workaday affairs is one of the loudest demands of the times. The terminology designating these meat and bread, life and death questions is interminable. "Child-labour," "trusts," "unions," "sweat-shops," "strikes," etc., are terms which hint at questions that fairly tingle with vital interest for all classes. They mark evils which pinch the toe of flesh, hence call forth a quick protest and a hurried prescription. But are not these fundamentally religious questions? Does not all evil have its tap-root in the soil which it is the business of religion to cultivate? A question of right may always be resolved into a question of righteousness, and the essence of wrong is always sin. And righteousness and sin are always matters which belong distinctly to religion as the sole arbiter. Politicians and legislators may poultice these social ills as they will but they cannot be cured until the seat of the disease is reached, and this is the work of religion—to be aggravated by a false religion, to be eradicated by the true one. The cure lies in giving health to social organisms rather than shape to social organizations. There is a manifest progress towards a general recognition of this. "We are beginning to hear from many quarters that the social question is at the bottom

a religious question."[1] "Men cannot come as individuals into right relations with God without also coming into right relations with one another. There is no right sociology which is not religious, and there is no religion which is not sociological."[2]

There may be good ground for lament that the sacred is being secularized, that worldliness is getting into religion, but there is also reason to rejoice that the secular is becoming sacred, that religion is getting into the world. No great problem of labour, finance or politics can be solved without the help of religion and men are finding it out.

But no less in its nature is the problem incapable of solution than is the society which it affects incapable of higher development until a religion has been found ample enough to embrace all its parts and adapted to all its relations. Religion has its own universal aspects, and, besides, is a part of the whole sociology. The progress of society is dependent upon a religion which can compass the whole of life and bind all its parts into a unity. The individual must be saved wholly and his life provided for fully. Human nature cannot be saved in sections. Religion must provide for man's life on Monday as well as for his worship on Sunday. The calendar of the upright life embraces three hundred and sixty-five holy days. The silken cord of the sacred must run through all the

[1] Kidd's "Social Evolution," p. 14.

[2] *Outlook*, Oct. 18, 1902, p. 416.

week and every task given to man. At its core all life must be the same. And the world is calling for a religion which shall meet these needs of man and mankind. A religion is wanted which is universal and synthetic. It must be more than worship; it must include prayer, praise, doctrine, morality, the ethics of commerce and industry and domestic and social principles which teach men the art of living together. Already nations are in such elbow-touch that it is no longer possible to guarantee the moral health of one nation independent of all others, and there can be no complete religious, moral or social redemption of one without the redemption of all. What was always true of men is now true of nations, no one liveth to itself.

3. There is one other demand for one religion for mankind which must be recognized and most of all must be reckoned with. It is the demand which the religious impulse makes. If the weight of this shall at present be admitted by but one class, it will be by this class considered the most imperative of all. The Christian will always be impelled towards universal conquest for his faith. It is an irrepressible impulse with him to have all men believe what he believes. This is what has been called "the art of compulsion for souls," and marks the highest Christian altruism. The Christian's faith is the best thing he has to give another, and the first, the strongest impulse of his nature is to impart and disseminate it. It prompts the first evangelical act and is at the root of all evangelistic

and missionary work. It feeds all missionary zeal and it is the motive of all missionary sacrifice. No intelligent Christian can be entirely peaceful so long as one man holds a creed radically differing from his. For one to be wrong in his religious belief involves consequences so grave that a good man cannot bear the thought of his neighbour entailing them. He finds his religion the surest source of happiness, but he cannot be fully happy until everybody else is offered the like happiness. He cannot fully enjoy his own salvation until everybody else is saved. To pass his religious experience on to others becomes his passion.

This earliest conscious experience of the converted soul increases in strength and controlling power with the growth of the religious life. In Christianity at large it increases with advancement in purity and enlightenment in Christian faith. So strong already has become this spontaneous force in Christianity that no power on earth could long repress it; and the tide is rising every hour. First to the ankles, then to the knees and now to the loins, soon it will be a river that cannot be passed over (Ezek. xlvii. 5). To the intelligent Christian there is no more sacred obligation than this, that having availed himself of Christ's grace, he should ally himself with His purpose. This impulse can never be satisfied nor subdued until all men are brought around to a common faith. Unless, therefore, Christianity shall change fundamentally and experimentally it will at last accomplish the prodigious

task of converting the world to one religion. And, as already shown, this characteristic is becoming more marked instead of fading. Prophecy brightens. Never before did Christianity so widely publish itself as a candidate for universal favour and never has it mustered such forces, controlled such influence and put forth such general and determined efforts for the accomplishments of this purpose. The magnitude of the task is realized as never before and the difficulties in the way of its accomplishment are more fully recognized; but instead of being daunted the conductors of the enterprise have been spurred to greater deeds and greater daring. It is the growth of courage and practical wisdom in handling this world-enterprise that has given birth to great convictions and great effort in all departments of Christian missions.

The conviction grows at remarkable pace that in our domestic missionary work we sustain a vital and essential relation to this universal enterprise and that in pastoral duty, Christian training, state and home missions, we are creating a base and source of supplies for this enterprise, and that we have here a task of equal importance with the remotest outreach of missions and one which we must perform faithfully and on a great scale. The vision of missionary statesmen and generals is the enlistment of a missionary army on the home field and the creation here of resources to support it at the front until the nations shall acknowledge Jesus the successor of Buddha and Mohammed. The campaign is to be

carried to a successful conclusion. All men may get ready to make a choice of a religion, for the issue is at the door.

There are in many quarters outside of Christianity signs of an intense craving for the unity of faith among the races of men. It is coming to a conscious degree of intensity among all peoples and all classes. Parliaments and congresses of religion, common in these new times, show the breadth and trend of the religious sentiment towards the settlement of present religious disagreements and ultimate religious unity. The fundamental Christian doctrines must constitute the terms of the peace compact at home and the conditions of alliance abroad. They constitute a distinctive message which we must sound throughout the homeland and resound through all the world until in the bonds of one faith the scattered races of men shall be united in a common and holy religious brotherhood. In the following pages we set forth what we take to be these distinctive elements of the universal faith.

PART II

I

A SELF-VERIFYING REVELATION FROM GOD—THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT SCRIPTURES

THE Scriptures contain and certify the Christian doctrines. They are, as Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall says, "the source and casket of the universal elements of the Christian religion."[1] And more, they give a self-evidencing disclosure of their divine authorship. Christians offer the doctrines of the Bible as the true religious creed and appeal to the Bible as authority for them. They set up the claim for these peculiar doctrines that they constitute the absolute religion, and for this religion the right to universal and exclusive dominion. The validity of such claims depends upon the proof which the Bible can furnish of being the inspired word of God, a claim which it makes for itself with tireless repetition. If it cannot bear an investigation into its own character and furnish substantial evidence of its inspiration, and of being a well authenticated revelation from God, the case will go hard for these doctrines and the claims which we make for them. Therefore, we may well face the question: Does the Bible possess internal evidence of being a

[1] "The Universal Elements of the Christian Religion," p. 236.

supernatural revelation? Does its contents verify its claims that it is divinely inspired? As F. D. Maurice says: "The question is whether we hold a system of opinions or a revelation from God." These questions may be answered with directness and confidence. The Bible does contain in itself conclusive proof that it is a supernatural revelation. Christians can afford to have that question and its answer sifted. The Bible is not the only book that makes this claim, but it is the only one that proves it to be true.

The self-verification which we claim includes, of course, the Old Testament; but, let it be noted, that this verification does not mean the same for the Jew as for the Christian. The strongest evidence which the Old Testament offers of its divine authorship confirms Christianity and condemns *mere* Judaism. The orthodox Christian believes all the Old Testament warrants the Jew in believing. Paul before Felix said, "So serve I the God of our fathers, believing all things which are according to the law and which are written in the prophets" (Acts xxiv. 14). The orthodox Jew must either deny the inspiration of important parts of his Bible or admit that they have failed to confirm themselves in furnishing a fulfillment of their own prophecies, although the race has waited more than two millenniums for such fulfillment. The Old Testament is a richer book for the Christian than for the Jew, because Jesus fulfills and ratifies it. "We have the word of prophecy made more sure"

(2 Peter i. 19, R. V.). The Old Testament is more a Christian Bible than a Jewish Bible. We claim more of it than the Jew can, and ours is its heart, his its hull. To him it is a book of letters; to us a book of life. To him belongs its rites, forms, ceremonies; to us its prophecies, promises and its Prince of Peace. For the Jew, there falls upon it the shadow of unfulfilled hope; for the Christian, there shines in it the radiance of a Sun of Righteousness, now risen with healing in His wings. His heart failing him, because of deferred hope, the Jew has at last given up his sacrificial types and forms, though he still holds in his nerveless fingers the book which prescribes them. To him the Bible appears to have promised what it has never given. A Messiah is necessary to confirm the inspiration of the Old Testament. The credibility of it is established for the Christian. Matthew, Mark, Luke and John validate the documents of Moses, David, Isaiah and Malachi. The New Testament is of one sort with the Old Testament, cut out of the same pattern of divine inspiration. It is enriched and made more beautiful by what the Old Testament contains and in turn enriches and beautifies that first Bible. The New Testament fulfills and brings out the deep religious meaning of the Old Testament. If I may so say, it fills it full by fulfilling it. As Canon Liddon has pointed out, "The sense of the Old Testament became patent in the New because the New Testament was latent in the Old." The Jew has no

completed Bible. The best half of his Bible is yet to be written if he is to justify his faith in what he now accepts.

Therefore, the Christian can claim as the Jew cannot, a self-verifying revelation from God. As one of the distinctive and fundamental Christian doctrines, this fact draws an absolute boundary between Christianity and every other religion in the world. It is as peculiar as it is fundamental to Christianity. This self-verification does not consist in one item or two, but in elaborate corroborative evidence. We review some of it.

1. The divine inspiration of the Bible is proven even by the lowest and most secular test possible, that of its literary form. From the view-point of its purpose, this is the merest incident. The purpose of its inspiration was not to make literature. The Bible has one thing in view from Genesis to Revelation, and that is to so present the mind, the will, the work and the love of God to a sinning race as to win it back to a lost birthright. Inspiration did not contemplate a literary classic. The men who wrote the Bible, with scarcely an exception, gave no probability of making a classic literature. Probably every age which produced one of these thirty-six books, owned men who were recognized as the superiors of these writers in the matter of literary qualification. Now, that, with another purpose in view and such men to compose it, the Bible should at last, according to the severest and most competent special criticism, be found to be the highest

form of literary composition down to our own time, we offer as evidence that it is of superhuman origin. Though men wrote it, God dictated it. God chose the weak things to confound the mighty. By Him, herdsmen and fishermen were able to produce immortal and incomparable literature. Not only did they surpass the nobility and culture of their own times, but of all days and of all lands. Human genius has been outrivalled in letters by men who never saw a schoolhouse nor read a book until they wrote one:

> "We search the world for truth; we cull
> The good, the pure, the beautiful
> From graven stone and written scroll
> From all old flower fields of the soul;
> And weary seekers of the best,
> We come back laden from our quest
> To find that all the sages said
> Is in the Book our mothers read."
>
> ("*Miriam*," *by Whittier.*)

The brightest lights of the best modern literature own the Old and New Testament writers their masters and acknowledge the Bible to be humanity's literary masterpiece. Prof. J. R. Seely, who certainly has no superstitious awe of the Bible, speaks for himself and men of his class: "The greatest book of individual literary genius is by the side of it, like some building of human hand beside the Peak of Teneriffe." Those who have read Professor Moulton's works on the Bible as literature,

or have read the Bible itself with discrimination, possessing a knowledge of other literature, will not gainsay this tribute. Another testimony, that of Wm. De Witt Hyde may be taken: "The Bible can no more again be equalled or surpassed than the ethics of Homer or the statues of Phidias." The Lord Bishop of Derry and Raphoe in his exposition of the epistle of John, has cited two excellent illustrations of this inability of highest genius to match the style of Scripture. One is the case when Victor Hugo, in "Légende des Siécles," puts words into the mouth of Christ additional to those John reports and exhibits by the contrast the obviously exaggerated and factitious hollowness of the imitation. Where Victor Hugo failed, no other modern writer need try. The other instance is Shakespeare in his description of Buckingham's noble spirit on trial in Henry VIII. The passage is too long to be quoted, and need not be, since it is accessible to all. The Bishop sums up the case thus: "Here is one man of all but the highest rank in dramatic genius, who utterly fails to invent even one sentence which could be possibly taken for an utterance of our Lord. Here is another, the most transcendent in the same order whom the human race has ever known, who tacitly confesses the impossibility of representing a character which shall be 'one entire and perfect chrysolite' without speck or flaw."[1]

[1] See "King Henry VIII," and "Expositor's Bible," Epistle of John, pp. 94-95.

There is no accounting for this eclipse of the world's great lights except upon the hypothesis that the men who wrote the Bible were superhumanly inspired. To these worldly geniuses was given a sort of mental inspiration; to these Biblical writers was given this and a spiritual illumination and a divine revelation. Their inspiration qualified them to make known the revelation and do it in a matchless style.

There is another element in this literary form and in which the Bible surpasses all other books, and which again gives evidence of its inspiration, namely its distinction of being an inspirer of books and an adornment of the best literature. The Bible is the best and the inspirer of the next best. Many of the great classics in our libraries were inspired by it. The "Inferno," "Paradise Lost," "Pilgrim's Progress," themselves great sources of literary streams which have refreshed and gladdened the minds of men the world over, bear unchallenged internal evidence of their own source. The authors received the divine afflatus while brooding over the pages of Inspiration. There are four hundred Bible quotations, it is said, in the poetry of Tennyson, and Shakespeare is coloured throughout with his knowledge and use of the Scriptures. Quotations, allusions, metaphors and moral maxims, are drawn from the Scriptures, and his highest reaches of style, verbal strength and beauty show indebtedness to this Book. It was Coleridge (consider the authority) who said, "The

intense study of the Bible will keep any writer from being vulgar in point of style." This pure fountain, having its sources in God, freshens every stream of wholesome literature.

2. When the circumstances of its writing are taken into account, the catholicity of the Bible is evidence of its superhuman origin. Never could have been chosen men more likely to give to the world a narrow and bigoted view of life and its interests, especially religious interests, than from among the Jews. In no other nation was racial exclusiveness, provincialism, and sectarianism, so deeply marked characteristics of a people. The Jew of ancient times was as provincial as the modern Jew is cosmopolitan. To the uninspired Jew, every man of every other race was a Gentile dog, a fit object of divine wrath, and his presence a defilement, while the Jews were divine favourites, and God's religion all for them. This catholicity was not an evolution, a growth, a process, by which these men who wrote the Scriptures were gradually and finally liberalized, but a crisis, effected by the enduement which prepared them to write. "Dost thou at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?" is the measure of uninspired Jewish desire and expectation in the days when the New Testament was a-making. The kingdom was all for Israel. "In Christ Jesus, there is neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free, male nor female" is the measure of inspired Jewish thought in the same period. Until God's revelation came to him, Simon Peter's view

of a devout Gentile was symbolized by things "common and unclean." Because Peter went among the Gentiles, and they "also received the word of God," even the Jewish Christians at Jerusalem called him to account and "contended with him" so much so that he must tell them "the Spirit bade me go." That explains his escape from his Jewish provincialism. It was only after they had "assuredly gathered that the Lord had called" them that Paul and Barnabas endeavoured to go into Macedonia, the distinctly Gentile country.

This sweeping comprehensiveness and all-inclusiveness of the Bible is one of the marvels of inspiration. The gospel of Jesus Christ surveys a larger field of human interest, comprehends the needs of all classes, conditions and races of men, is adapted to universal human life as no other book ever written is. Its verbal imagery and illustrations lend themselves readily to the comprehension of all qualities of mind, degrees of intelligence, the residents of every land and age, the people of every tongue and environment. The scope of sympathy and humanity, the breadth of outlook and exact adaptation to the varied wants of human society, character and temperament, the unconventional fraternity and impartial fellowship presented in this charter of New Testament Christianity is quite without parallel in the whole realm of history and literature. Translated into whatever speech, the Bible, we are told, at once seems a

native literature, the most human and familiar book in the house, speaking a word to each inmate and showing a most marvellous personal interest.

This catholicity is shown in the New Testament conception of the vast scope of the Christian enterprise. That these humble first believers should ever have gotten it into their heads that they were founders of a universal spiritual empire, is quite beyond the power of reason to believe, had they not been mightily wrought upon by some external power. We might as well be expected to believe that a Hottentot of our day conceived the Hague Peace Congress or inaugurated the international news system. Until this day, even this day of enlightenment, only the most spiritual grasp this vast enterprise and give life and money to it. This gigantic world-adventure, about which these New Testament writers speak with such ease and confidence and to which they lend themselves so enthusiastically and yet work so practically, lay beyond the reach of any unaided human mind, and specially the minds of men who had never seen the great world's life, never crossed its great seas, seen its great cities, nor heard nor dreamed of modern steamships, railroads, telegraphy and printing-presses. None of these things were at hand to broaden their conceptions of the world and of facilitated missionary effort. They had great thoughts and great plans, because God gave them such. We may say of what they wrote:

"Every line was full of light
Every word bedewed with drops of Love divine,
And with eternal heraldry and signature of God Almighty
Stamped from first to last."

Surely there is no other solution to this enigma. This all-encompassing quality of the Scriptures, this keyboard containing all the notes of hope, aspiration and minor chords of personal sin and sorrow of all men, of all sinners and all who weep, with a solace for each; surely, we say, only God, the maker of us all, could have given the world such a book. Only He who knows all men and knows us as we do not know ourselves could have touched with such precision all the chords of our being and grasped the magnitude of our varied and immeasurable need. These catholic elements are the Book's own internal and indisputable evidence that it is from God. As has often been said, it is far easier to believe that God inspired it than that such men wrote it of their own wisdom.

3. The lofty individual and social morality of the Book separates it from all other ancient literatures. The classic, philosophical and religious books of the East are alike filled with obscenity. Translations of even the religious books of the Ancient Orient have to be edited and expurgated with a free hand to avoid shocking unduly the Christian reader; and still much of coarseness remains in the best translations. The lofty and beautiful things found in some of these books are not sufficient to

redeem them, nor for a moment to place them in comparison with the Holy Scriptures. Prof. Max Muller translated the "Sacred Books of the East" for scientific purposes and yet had to apologize for omitting passages which were too revolting to be put into modern language.[1] This, be it remembered, is the case with the religious books which are the only formidable rivals of the Bible for recognition as revelation. To the same effect, Professor Chamberlain, who translated the Japanese "Sacred Books." "The shocking obscenity of word and act to which the 'records' bear witness is another ugly feature. . . . The whole language of literature might perhaps be ransacked for a parallel to the native filthiness of certain passages here." The Koran sanctions polygamy, permits successive divorces, prescribes that "Whosoever transgresses against you by so doing, do ye transgress against him in like manner as he has transgressed against you;" "Fight for the religion of God," and contains various other shocking deflections from common standards of morality and social order which show a vast chasm between it and the Scriptures which enjoin a pure heart and lift up an ideal of holiness for all men in all human relations.

What makes the difference? Simply this: one is a human composition of the flesh fleshly, though it professes inspiration; the other is inspired of God and contains its own evidences of this fact if no

[1] See "Sacred Books of the East," Vol. I, Preface.

profession of it were made. It is not human for it is unlike the human books.

4. But the Scriptures contain something more than ideal morals. There is constituent in them a spiritual and moral dynamic which makes for righteousness and which sets up evidence that they issue from the Source of moral law and life. They not only outclass all literature in exalted moral standard, but as exalted as is this standard, they nevertheless more nearly produce character in agreement with their ideal than any other book. As great as is the discrepancy between the average Christian life and the Christian Scriptures, Christian history has been and Christian society to-day is adorned by many examples of life and conduct which, since these own the Scriptures to be the guide of their spiritual life, give as strong evidence of the inspiration of those Scriptures as do the high moral ideals of Scriptures themselves. No other book has stored in it such potential moral energies, and all others combined have not let loose in the world such uplifting, energizing, purifying influences as this Book has poured into the enfeebled constitutions of men and the putrid channels of social and national life. Goldwin Smith says, "Greece rose from the dead with the New Testament in her hand." Notwithstanding all her culture and all her religion and divinities, Greece was in moral decay. And what the New Testament did for her it can do for the dead everywhere, even for those whose religions are, like the Greeks, but

funeral rites of moral life and hope. The effect produced by a sincere acceptance of the Bible is always of the same sort. Never a man nor a people lays this Book to heart that there is not begun immediately a moral ascent. It is no respecter of persons; whether Fiji Islander, or the scholar, the moral reprobate, or the tender maiden, the result is the same; all fix new ideals, live to larger purpose, grow better, more unselfish, useful and happy.

The Bible actually does what it says it can do and works into men its own ideals and their realization. The Word of God is not only pure but it is powerful (Heb. iv. 12; Prov. xxx. 5). The testimony of all who have tried it is that "Thy word hath quickened me" (Psa. cxix. 50). "It proves its own inspiration and authority by its power beyond all other books to quicken and sustain the lift of the Spirit. The response of the spirit in the reader is the witness to the presence of the Spirit in the writers and their words. For the power to beget holy and unselfish living, the power to inspire brave and faithful service, the power to impart enthusiastic and devoted love to God and to one's fellow men;—this is even the prerogative of the Holy Spirit; the infallible proof of the presence of the Lord and Giver of life."[1] It is because of this quality by which it ministers to the devout soul that Cowper wrote:

[1] "Outlines of Social Theology," by Wm. De Witt Hyde, pp. 189–190.

"The cottager who weaves at her door
Pillow and bobbing all her little store,
Just knows, and knows no more, her Bible true,
A truth the brilliant Frenchman never knew ;
And in that charter reads with sparkling eyes
Her title to a treasure in the skies."

But there is no need to expand this point. The low moral state and social condition known by every one to exist in non-Christian lands contrasted—they cannot be compared—with the society in Christian countries, are convincing proof. If the divine element in the Scriptures, which more than all else regulates our social order, be denied, then these who make the denial must furnish an explanation of this contrast. And there is no exception on the one hand or the other. In every land heathenism degrades and Christianity elevates. Both have made their experiments on different nations and on the same nations cotemporaneously, and the result always emphasizes the contrast. "My word shall not return unto Me void, but shall accomplish, etc." Wherever the truth of Revelation has been sown, it has fertilized the minds and the moral lives of men; works of art, literature, invention and discovery, virtues and philanthropies, deeds of charity and the finest spiritual graces, have appeared to enrich and adorn human society and to produce a civilization as distinctive as the Scriptures themselves are. That which makes men good and the race truly and permanently happy surely comes from God.

But this class of evidence has another interesting and convincing aspect. The edifying power of Christianity in the life of a people and the improvement of moral conditions among them by the moral dynamic resident in the Scriptures seems to be gauged by the degree of accessibility which the people of professed Christian lands have to the Scriptures. In Roman Catholic countries, for instance, the Scriptures are not freely distributed among the masses, and they are not encouraged to cultivate a close personal acquaintance with them as is the case in Protestant countries; and a difference in intellectual, social and moral conditions is the consequence. The contrast which the traveller observes between the civilization of Protestant and the Papal countries is only surpassed by that which he observes between Christian and pagan lands.

This, too, is a rule to which there is not a single exception. No matter how close together or how widely separated, how near the racial kin or divorced by ethnological distinctions, the Roman Catholic civilization is always the inferior civilization in comparison with the Protestant. The examples may be the Philippine Islands and the United States, or the State of Texas and its door neighbour, the Republic of Mexico, it matters not. The Roman hierarchy produces a partial and incomplete Christian civilization. Macaulay saw this and called attention to it long ago in his "History of England." (See his first volume.) The explanation is chiefly to be found in the use which Protes-

tants and Romanists make of the Word of God. While showing the author's inconsistent logic, the words of Sabatier are nevertheless true: "The destiny of holiness on earth is irrevocably linked with the destiny of the Bible."[1] Gladstone, with his views of the authority of the Bible, was more consistent in saying: "My only hope for the world is in bringing the human mind into contact with the divine Revelation."

5. The unity of the Scriptures proves that behind their verbal composition there was a single controlling mind. Here are sixty-six books, a cyclopedia of religious knowledge, a library of Christian literature, written by at least sixteen individuals representing perhaps as great a variety of talent, temperament and training as could be found and selected out of various periods, embracing at least fifteen hundred years. With few exceptions, these writers never saw each other, and so there could have been no agreement or collusion to shape expression one after the other. These were not the product of one educational institution, which, if such were the case, might account for some though not all resemblances. Without exception, they were men of strong personalities, individualistic in mental habit and moral courage. They spoke amidst widely different conditions and each was a voice to his own generation, suiting his message to his times. They were not imitators nor copyists. And yet, there is such agreement, such harmony, such unity

[1] "Religions of Authority," p. xxix.

in diversity as is found only in the works of God. A "profound intellectual and moral conformity" exists in these writings. These many compositions constitute a perfect symphony. There is one orderly and tuneful progression ever breaking forth into distincter and fuller strains from the first note of Genesis to the sublime and glorious finale of Revelation. And the unifying theme is the Son of God, the Messiah of the Old Testament, the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ of the New. It is His presence in every book and the efforts of all the writers to announce His day that constitutes the controlling and symphonizing note of the inspired Revelation. The first chord struck by Moses is in anticipation of the last one struck by John and determined what that last note must be. The whole intervening composition keeps to that first harmony and progresses towards that climax. The prophets are the accompanyists to the evangelists. Prophecy and gospel balance and blend in the great tune. The twenty-second Psalm and the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah are the subdued minor prelude to the wailing fortissimo of the twenty-seventh chapter of Matthew, whose deep diapason made the solid earth tremble and rent the veil of the Temple in twain.

This book is the world's great epic of religion. It has its parts, as is fitting a great masterpiece, each to portray a particular phase of the transcendent theme and give it expression and proper relief, but the most discriminating critic pronounces

the whole perfect in symmetry. The Pentateuch is a well conceived proem to what follows, as Revelation is a perfect climacteric peroration to what precedes. Each main division fitly introduces its successor and supplements its predecessor. There is not a book of the Canon which may not be quoted by the preacher to enforce or illuminate whatever other of these books he may be elucidating. In support of this fact and as proof of the divine element in the Scriptures, Canon Liddon says aptly: "In uninspired literature such as the Greek or the English, it would be absurd to appeal to a primitive analyst or poet with the view to determine the meaning of an author of some later age." This perfect unity in such marvellous variety, taken together with our knowledge of the multiplicity of writers, cannot be accounted for except upon the ancient and accepted Christian belief that the book has one Author. "Every Scripture inspired of God is also profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction and for instruction in righteousness;" "for no prophecy ever came by will of man, but men spoke from God, being moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Tim. iii. 16; 2 Peter i. 21).

6. Finally, not to exhaust the evidence and yet to be conclusive, the information which the Scriptures give us concerning things which transcend human knowledge, is a proof of their divine Authorship. This book is as much at home when it talks about angels as it is when it talks about men; when it tells us about the future as well as when it tells

us about the past. It speaks as familiarly of heaven as of Jerusalem; of heaven's mansions, their beauty and the joy which reigns in them, as of our own human abodes and the sickness and sorrow which shadow them.

> "As little children lisp and tell of Heaven;
> So thoughts beyond their thoughts to those high bards were given."

There is here confident assurance concerning matters which have perplexed all the philosophers and after which they are still guessing. And moreover, every note on these transcendent themes is found to be so true whenever human knowledge and experience rise high enough to test and verify it that this superhuman element is more and more gaining credibility. Whenever knowledge and culture have advanced sufficiently to test it, the Revelation has been found to be so consistent with the findings of our reason and the experiences of our hearts, a conviction of trustworthiness is forced upon the reader. And there is here no sign of the extravagance or the fabulous, no striving after mere startling effect, such as invariably attaches to uninspired literature in which an attempt is made to discuss these themes. The romantic and mythological characteristics which disfigure all other sacred books are wanting here. There is evident restraint when Biblical writers tell us about angelic beings, the spirit world and the manifestations of

divine power. Metaphor and hyperbole which colour and garnish even human history of our heroes and their deeds of valour, are discarded in the Scripture narrative of miracles and divine manifestations.

But the Scriptures submit themselves to veritable tests whether they really speak with knowledge, when they speak on high themes. For instance, the writers have written much about what was future to them in this present world, as well as that which lies within that larger distant future. "These are matters lying beyond the range of unaided human knowledge and must be either a fabrication or revelation."[1] Much of that which was once prophecy has become history; perhaps much the larger part of the whole period covered by prophecy to be fulfilled on earth has already elapsed. What is the answer which history gives to prophecy? So perfectly has the undesigning but faithful historian filled in the prophet's outline, that he might be taken for the latter's pupil. The literal fulfillment of prophecy, which the "fullness of time" has already completed, becomes a sure ground of confidence for what remains to be fulfilled. And as time passes, history continues to give its authentication to Scripture. In fulfillment of specific prophecies of the Book, nations have risen and fallen, the proud have been carried into captivity, the sites of great cities

[1] Charles Cuthbert Hall, "The Universal Elements of the Christian Religion."

have become waste places of earth. Such facts bring to naught that which, passing for scholarly criticism, endeavours to class these prophecies with ancient oriental divination and fortune-telling. There is absolutely no kinship or parallel to be discovered. The fulfillments of prophecy forbid that they should be put in such category. These fulfillments are too many and too extraordinary to be thought of as mere coincidences. The Biblical writers committed themselves to great and momentous events in the history of nations, the race and the world, and stake their veracity on their foretellings. Mighty epochs of history punctuate the fulfillment of independent and successive prophecies.

Let one example of the unerring spirit of discernment of future events characteristic of the Scriptures suffice. That which is chief of all and to which other prophecies are but as side-lights, is sufficient in itself. The principal theme of prophecy is Messianic and the principal history of the New Testament is the life of Jesus. That history and the history of succeeding Christian centuries so corroborate and confirm the truth of Old Testament prophecy as to close the whole question of the superhuman wisdom of the Bible. This prophetic history is something more than that life in general outline. It enters into detail and gives minute particulars. A substantial biography of Christ could indeed be compiled from prophecies uttered in many and different centuries before Christ began

His earthly course. Moses' foregleams fit into David's poetic rhapsodies and these into Isaiah's and Micah's narratives as consistent parts, each adding to the portraiture and measure of the stature of Christ as a vision of it was permitted to those who long before His birth rejoiced to see His day, saw it, and were glad (John viii. 56). His luminous personality shone through the veil of centuries and hearts that would have fainted took courage at a vision of Him, and out of their joy and gladness these separate parts of a consistent and consecutive narrative were "written in the law of Moses and in the prophets and in the Psalms."

This volume of things concerning Him were fulfilled in His birth, His life, His deeds and His death and were written down by eye-witnesses in unimpeachable corroboration of that prenatal history. Those who saw Him and "painted Him as He was" left us a picture which we find to be the exact replica of that which prophets painted with such colours as God gave them. A student of Scripture has marked three hundred and thirty-three Old Testament prophecies concerning Jesus which were literally fulfilled and are perfectly confirmed by New Testament Scripture. The following are a few of these prophecies. The corresponding New Testament history will readily occur to every one: Born of a virgin (Isa. vii. 14); At Bethlehem (Micah v. 2); Entry into Jerusalem (Zach. ix. 9); Betrayed by a friend (Psa. xli. 9); Forsaken by His disciples (Zach. xiii. 7); Sold for

thirty pieces of silver (Zach. xi. 12); Spit upon and scourged (Isa. l. 6); Not a bone broken (Ex. xii. 46); Given gall and vinegar (Psa. lxix. 21); Garments parted and lots cast (Psa. xxix. 18); Taunted for non-deliverance of God (Psa. xxii. 8); Mocked (Psa. xxii. 7); Feet pierced (Psa. xxii. 16); Several particulars of His trial, sentence and death (Isa. l. 3). How could men have written such a history of Christ centuries before His birth if God had not revealed these things to them? Nothing which can of right be called mental sanity will attribute these marvellous corroborations to mere accident or chance. There is no other instance in the whole realm of literature outside of the Bible of such perfect and minute fulfillment of human forecasts of individual life, acts and events. In no other instance is history written before it is made.

But there is still another class of facts which transcend unaided human powers and which are also so set forth as to prove the presence of a divine wisdom in their prediction. The Bible is unique as a manual of prayer and the sole proprietor of certain spiritual experiences which are imparted to the worshipper in answer to prayer. It gives explicit instructions by which its theory of prayer may be tested and these experiences obtained. "Ask and ye shall receive," "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." These are clear and straightforward statements which any one can prove for himself and so ascertain whether or not the Scriptures are what they claim to be, the very

word and promise of God. Literal millions of the most respectable, truthful and trusted people now living have put the Book to test in these matters, and the result is another self-verification of the divine inspiration which produced them and now resides in them. Millions would swear in any court on earth that they had by following the instructions given here experienced the very things which the Scriptures promised. To refuse credence to their testimony would be to invalidate every oath of every character in every court of the land. If the men and women who bear this testimony cannot be trusted to tell the truth, then certainly we cannot trust anybody to tell it. There is more in the lives of these men to corroborate their testimony and more testimony can be secured to their good character to give weight to their testimony than any other class can produce. This fact can, therefore, be supported by the strongest direct and circumstantial evidence.

Now, can any other book which men can bring forward, though they ransack every land and every library on earth, make such claims or challenge the claims of this book to supreme and unique preëminence? Does any other book thus prove its divinity? Against this testimony which the Bible gives of its own inspiration let us place one sentence written by a true and good man who has spent a quarter century studying the ethnic faiths, and who loves their votaries with a truly Christlike passion: "In the ethnic religions, with the exception of

some distant and indistinct echoes of primitive revelation, all is the product of human thought and carries with it the evidences of earthly origin."[1] All other books contain their own evidence of their human source; the Bible is a self-verifying revelation from God. The great and distinctive doctrines are contained in the Revelation which we name as the first of them. It is the precious repository of the peculiar faith of a peculiar people. We must keep it inviolate if we would keep these invaluable doctrines and make them universal. The Bible holds them in their purity and right proportion. It does not contain all the truth, nor every kind of truth in the world, but it holds the Truth which all the world beside does not contain and which is an order of truth distinct from mere scientific knowledge.

There is abroad a scholastic sophism which avers that truth is one and puts an equal premium on all knowledge. Evangelical truth is a distinct essence both in quality and potentiality. It is the Truth which if a man know he shall be made free. A man ought to know other things; he must know this. He is ignorant without the other; he is lost without this. It is more than fact; it is doctrine, it is gospel. It is not merely addressed to the intellect and reason, but to the heart and conscience. It begets a spiritual experience and imparts moral energy. Possessing it, a man is surcharged with its vital principle. It is not simply knowledge, it is life that a

[1] W. B. Boggs.

man possesses after he has learned evangelical truth after the evangelical method.

The Bible in a unique sense is a revelation and as such its religious function is distinct. It is the standard of religious truth. Religious truth gotten elsewhere is gold from the mine; taken from this Book, it is gold from the mint with the stamp of the kingdom upon it. Elsewhere truth is partial and polluted; here it is pure and perfect. In other books you may find religious truth in fragments; in this Book in fullness. In them we catch its glimmer; in this we behold it in its glory. All truth is good; but Bible truth is the gauge. Search for it where you will, but sift it here. Welcome it from everywhere, but weigh it by this standard. This Book is the test of all that challenges the verity or courts the company of its doctrines. In the light of Revelation we may revise our opinions, but our opinions may not revise Revelation. This Bible is perhaps the only creed that does not in our day need revising. Scholars may study it, translate it but dare not revise the original content when that is known. We do not need a "Revised Bible." The purpose of more careful translation should be to correct human revision of the divine revelation. With the Bible as authority, I may sit in judgment on other books; but as Tayler Lewis says: "This Book sits in judgment on me." Let evangelical Christians make the words of Kerr Boyce Tupper their slogan, "The Bible, no additions to it, no subtractions from it, no alterations in it to the

end of time:" and as they get light on it, practice what they learn. They will thus be drawn together in bonds stronger and a union more real and enduring than are found in all human orders and societies, and they will steadily and surely draw the rest of the world to the unique and saving truths which this Book contains.

The Scripture revelation is self-verifying; but this does not mean a verification of special interpretations of it. The infallibility of the Word honestly applied as a standard of authority may indeed prove the fallibility of the interpreter. We are not prepared to carry the science of interpretation to perfection until we decide whether or not the Book is a true and consistent revelation, needing only to be understood to regulate all that is out of conformity to it. What is the use of searching for its meaning if you are not sure that the meaning is consequential? Admitting that it is true in its original content and real meaning, we may welcome any criticism, higher or lower, that will help us to understand it; but we emphatically dissent from criticism which would be considered as authoritative as the Book.

The unqualified acceptance by all men of this self-attested Revelation as the supreme test of religious faith would shortly bring the religious thinking of the world into harmony and lead the race to the goal which religion is designed to guide men to. This would not only settle questions over which Christian sects war, but all those larger

issues about which philosophers speculate and dispute and which divide the races absolutely into opposing religions, such as Brahmanism, Buddhism, Christianity, etc. The following brief sentences, quoted by Dr. J. R. Sampey,[1] show how this process would advance. He is speaking of the first words of the Bible: "In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth." "This first verse denies atheism; for it assumes the being of God. It denies polytheism, and, among its various forms, the doctrine of two eternal principles, the one good and the other evil; for it confesses the one eternal Creator. It denies materialism, for it asserts the creation of matter. It denies pantheism; for it assumes the existence of God before all things and apart from them. It denies fatalism; for it involves the freedom of the Eternal Being." If the first verse of Scripture would settle so much, we may be sure the whole Bible, if accepted, would fix all the rest. Until all the earnest seekers after religious truth shall admit that this Revelation is the standard and authority of final appeal, we may not expect a synthesis of religious belief.

[1] "The Heart of the Old Testament."

II

A PERSONALLY REVEALED DEITY—THE DOCTRINE OF THE INCARNATION

THE most important consideration in connection with any religion is the idea of the Deity it contains. There can be no true religion where there is a false notion of God. The essential difference between natural religion and revealed religion is the revelation of Deity which they respectively recognize. The revelation of God in Jesus Christ, of which Christianity boasts, differentiates it from all other religions by so great a gulf as that which exists between nature and the supernatural. The infinite measure of Deity divides them. The proof of its doctrine of Incarnation is sufficient to distinguish Christianity from all other religions and to establish its right to supersede them. Man must have a revelation of God if he is to serve Him. In Jesus Christ only men find the "effulgence of His glory and the very image of His person," even as through Christ only they may hope to find that glory which it is the ultimate end of religion to gain for man.

The human heart has voids which only the Infinite can fill and hopes which Christ alone has been found to satisfy. The soul has no such unquenchable thirst as its conscious desire for God.

"My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of Jehovah; my heart and my flesh cry out unto the living God" (Psa. lxxxiv. 2). This cry of the soul is for knowledge of His moral attributes, His nature, and His disposition towards one of His moral creatures, all conscious of sin, and for communion with Him. This is the agonizing cry of every man in his moments of truest self-consciousness. "My most passionate desire," says Tennyson, "is for a fuller and clearer vision of God." A God "to love and be loved by forever," is an insatiable desire in every human soul. Such a revelation is also necessary in order to calm man's fears for the future, and give him confidence in a kind treatment there. We need not look for a revelation elsewhere than in Christ.

Finding God in Christ, Christians love Him; others fear Him. The discovery of God in Christ for the first time set the world a-singing. Eusebius, the first church historian, tells us that, "from the beginning," the persecuted disciples poured forth their joyful praises to Christ, "calling Him God." In the first century, Pliny writes that "they (the Christians) were accustomed on a stated day to meet before daylight and to repeat among themselves a hymn to Christ as to a God." At last men had found in religion that which satisfied the soul, that for which all religion was a search. With all the soul's deep desire for God, sinful man must confess:

"Till God in human flesh I see,
My thoughts no comfort find."

Robert Browning sounds the depth of the human soul and voices the desire of his own :

"'Tis the weakness in strength that I cry for !
My flesh that I seek in the Godhead ! I seek and find it.
O Saul it shall be a face like to my face that receives
Thee; a Man like me, thou shalt love and be loved
Forever, a hand like this hand shall throw open the gates
Of new life to thee ! See the Christ stand !"

Sir Oliver Lodge says: "I believe that the most essential element in Christianity is the conception of a human God."[1] The incarnation answers the call of the human heart after God, and constitutes a fundamental characteristic of Christianity. It radically distinguishes it from all that came before it, and as radically from all its contemporaries. The deifications, incarnations and transmigrations of the other religions are irrational, fantastic, grotesque, sometimes monstrous and revolting incidents in the literature of religion and bear only a semblance to the incarnation. Take, for instance, the Egyptian deity-manifestations, one in the form of a ram, another a crocodile, a he-goat, a she-wolf, a baboon, a cat, a cow, a snake, etc., etc. The most familiar and conspicuous example of these ethnic incarnations, Vishnu in Hinduism, is equally grotesque. The incarnations of Vishnu are represented to be first in the form of a great fish, then a tortoise, a boar, etc., tersely enumerated and fairly characterized in poetic form by Edwin Arnold, an

[1] "Science and Immortality," p. 285.

intense admirer of Buddhism, in his "Light of Asia."[1]

> "Fish! that didst outswim the flood;
> Tortoise! whereon earth hath stood;
> Boar! who with thy tush held'st high
> The world! that mortals might, not die;
> Lion! who hast giants torn;
> Dwarf! who laugh'dst a king to scorn;
> Soul Subduer of the Dreaded!
> Slayer of the many-headed!
> Mighty Plowman! Teacher tender!
> Of thine own the sure Defender!
> Under all thy ten disguises
> Endless praise to thee arises."

Krishna is characterized by Dr. Boggs who, by study for the greater part of a half-century, had penetrated the verbal and moral significance of Hinduism as "the sly thief and shameless libertine whose libidinous exploits among the shepherd women gained for him an epithet by which he is commonly known to-day, viz., 'Gopinahda, the Lord of the shepherdesses.'" Could such a life represent God, or any book that claims it does be divinely inspired? In the Holy Scriptures God is ever the Holy and Righteous One. "Holy, Holy, Holy is the Lord God Almighty." It is this holiness Jesus comes to represent and exemplify and so lived among a degenerated race, "holy, guileless, undefiled and separated from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26).

What religious purpose can such fables serve?

[1] Pages 176–178.

Krishna was repeatedly guilty of murder and theft, even stealing a sacred tree in heaven. His polygamy extended to sixty thousand wives who bear him eighteen thousand sons.[1] Such "Incarnations" do not reveal Deity but rather blind the spiritual eyes of men and obscure the face of the Deity. Jesus opened blinded eyes and made clear disclosure of God. His revelation purifies, while Krishna darkens the vision and putrefies the ethical ideals of his devotees. Max Muller's definition of religion is one Christianity alone meets. "Religion is," he says, "the perception of the Infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of men." Gautama did not include Deity in his philosophy. In the absence of a Deity, his disciples afterwards deified him and he became the Buddha. The Christian doctrine reverses the heathen process. God here becomes human; there man becomes divine. Jesus came down, and in Gautama and other like fables man went up. Jesus emptied Himself and became the companion of the lowly; they arose to superiority.

Important to a proper consideration of these incarnations, is the conclusion of scholars that they are growths, and not of the original content of any ethnic faith. Not until Christian centuries had multiplied does there appear any well authenticated claim for an incarnation in Hinduism.[2] Just as Roman Catholicism sought to overcome and absorb

[1] "Christ and Other Masters," pp. 199-200.

[2] *Ibid.*, pp. 201-203.

heathenism by appropriating some of its forms and giving them Christian meaning, so Hinduism tried to compete with Christianity by imitating its doctrine of Incarnation. The successive Llama "incarnations" of Buddhism in Tibet and elsewhere are modern inventions of comparatively recent historical origin; and even these do not represent appearances of Deity, but deifications, and reappearances of supreme monks. Good authority establishes the fact that in its primitive form, Buddhism was even atheistic and therefore had no room for a mundane Deity as it had no celestial abode for man. Without a God as the primary requisite of its creed, annihilation of personality was the goal of Buddhism.

In distinction to all this, the incarnation of Christ, an original fundamental and peculiar doctrine of Christianity, is the purest and most beautiful fact in the history and doctrines of religion, and like every essential Christian truth, is authenticated by many infallible proofs.

We adduce one of these proofs but one which, if established, constitutes the strongest inferential testimony to the validity of all others. We name the sinlessness of Jesus as unassailable evidence of His Deity. Naturally, I think, we would look for the sufficient and convincing evidence of His Deity in Himself, and, since the purpose of such a revelation is religious, we would expect to find the most prominent exhibition of the divine presence to be moral and spiritual and not physical. Physical

gianthood is a very ancient heathen conception of Deityhood, but would not, to-day, constitute evidence in a court of high moral order. The highest moral perfection is the most religious conception of God. The test of religion and of religious profession is character. If Jesus is found sinless, there is no need of other proof; if in any particular, He falls short of this, no testimony to His Divinity is valid; if in anything He is less than this, it is invalidated. He made claims of supernatural origin and destiny of divine authority and power, made promises, assumed prerogatives, declared Himself to be the arbiter of human destiny and happiness in such a way and to such a degree as none but God could. Nothing short of a godlike life can support such claims of godlike offices. These, and all other testimonies collapse if He is convicted of sin. All other evidences of Christianity which rest upon His words and works are inferentially verified by His sinlessness. His sinlessness gives credibility to His testimony. "The main historic evidence of the resurrection of Christ was the life He lived before He died on the cross." [1]

That life is also the strongest support of all else of a miraculous and divine character we believe concerning Him. Evidently the wisdom which inspired the records of His earthly career meant that what He was, rather than the miracles He wrought, should claim the largest attention and constitute the fullest evidence that He was what He claimed

[1] Upham.

to be, God manifest in the flesh; for all His biographers have devoted most of their space to the life which He lived, rather than to the miracles which He wrought or that which He accomplished in His resurrection. His life must constitute the moral, that is to say, the religious revelation which He makes. Prove His character and you establish the character of His testimony which is a claim for Deity revealed in His person.

Hear Him: "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father." He testifies of Himself that, "Before Abraham was, I am." As Liddon points out, not I *was* but I *am*, denoting preëxistent, eternal being. He teaches Nicodemus that He is one who "descended out of heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven" (John iii. 13). He told the Jews, "I and the Father are one" (John x. 30). He claimed to forgive sins, promised eternal life for all who believed on Him, and declared that He would judge the world. No mere man could make such claims without involving himself in deepest guilt. Even Jesus must back such claims with a godlike life, a heavenly character, or His claims fall to the ground. "Nothing but His true and real divinity can save Him from the accusation of blasphemy and us from idolatry."[1] And nothing short of a divine life will sufficiently attest His divine nature. As Weiss says, this is "The dilemma from which there is no escape: He who has removed from the eyes of all the blindness and

[1] Christlieb, "Modern Doubt and Christian Belief," p. 441.

self-deception and of self-righteousness, who has taught us all to seek forgiveness where it is to be found, He was either the chief of sinners, for self-righteous pride is the root and climax of sin, or He was the only sinless one upon whose life the peace of God rested." He who convicted all men of sin, and required repentance and confession of them on penalty of eternal ruin, never acknowledged sin in Himself. Truly, therefore, He was either more or less than a good man.

To the question, therefore, Was Jesus sinless? the answer may be made without qualification. The critical judgment of nineteen centuries has left His character unmarred, and His holy name vindicated. The pure eye of the saintliest and the suspicious eye of the irreligious critic alike have failed to find a sin-spot on the white garment of His immaculate righteousness. Not even a momentary lapse from His high rectitude or a devious word in all that He spoke has been discovered. A sensitive spirit like Alfred Tennyson was constrained to say, "I am amazed at the splendour of Christ's purity and holiness and at His infinite beauty." He made such an exhibition of virtue as was never found in man, yea, all that we could wish or imagine in a god. Indeed only the God of Christianity can match Christianity's Christ. No other religion ever portrayed a god equal to that which Christ reveals. Even the gods of the old heathenism were sinners. The gods of Greece fought among themselves and lived in luxury, free-love and pleasure,

disregarding the woes of man. Instead of learning virtues from the gods, men imputed their own vices to their divinities, and in turn had these vices nourished in themselves by their religious devotions. Jesus Christ exhibited the first perfect manhood and first revealed a perfect Godhood.

No other religion, however much below Christianity in its ethical standards, furnishes a perfect historical exemplar of its moral ideals. Mohammedans teach that "all the prophets"—Adam, David and Mohammed—were sinless, but this claim is contradicted by familiar facts in the lives of these men, and is more than a sign of a low moral standard in the system which makes the claim.[1] Not even Buddha, the best of them all, affords such an example. Other religions invite men to follow founders who did not live up to what they taught and what is expected of their votaries. As Walker says, "Theory without practice and precept without example, does not constitute a perfect system of religion."[2] The words of Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall are equally pertinent at this point: "The dynamic of Christianity was found originally in the person of Christ and not in the eloquence of His sayings and the beneficence of His actions. The sayings and the actions took on their great significance because of what He was in Himself, as the effulgence of the Father's glory and the express image of His substance. Well did Whately say,

[1] See "Moslem Doctrine of God," by S. M. Zwemer, p. 114.
[2] "Philosophy of Salvation," p. 120.

'Christ came not so much to *make* a revelation of truth by His own words, as to *be* a revelation of truth in His own person.'"[1] When Adam sinned, the model after which the race was henceforth to be made was spoiled. Sin impaired man's vision so that he could not after see God till Christ and the new Adam appeared. Jesus disclosed the true God and the real man. "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father," He could say. Not without Deity could perfect manhood be exhibited and only in a perfect man could Deity be perfectly revealed to man. A perfect revelation of God makes a perfect revelation of man, even as a bright sun lights the face of him who beholds it. "As through a transparent medium, the things of God shone into His soul." No ray of divine light was deflected by beam or mote in Him. His clear eye rightly focused all the rays of truth and thus gained a perfect vision.

Therefore, His representations of truth are true. Such a life is a solitary exception to all that crowd the history of the race. Only poetic license could justify the ascription to King Arthur of "The white flower of a blameless life," but the critics of Christianity have for two millenniums left Christ's name untarnished by a single plausible rumour. Jesus boldly put the challenge, "Which of you convicteth me of sin?" Not one, even of those that hated Him most and desired above all things His conviction, could prove Him

[1] "Universal Elements of the Christian Religion," p. 106.

guilty of such a charge even before an unbelieving judge, who would have been glad to have Him proven guilty that he might get Him off his hands.

It was in the second century before a critic could be found with the temerity to challenge Christ's claim to sinlessness. Celsus, when he had raised the question, was not able to support it and no other critic of weight was found to propose it for near two thousand years. Then arose a few men of respectable ability who, while not affirming moral obliquity, set up an interrogation point. These were routed from the field even by men as critical as themselves and with as little reverence for evangelical claims. The few recent feeble burlesques on criticism which have tried to find moral distortion in certain incidents in His life have already caused their authors to be laughed or scorned out of court for their puerile efforts. The world's decision has been made, and will not be reversed. Intelligent critics vie with one another in laudation of His peerless life. Goethe, Christian neither by profession nor practice, says: "The human mind, no matter how much it may advance in intellectual culture and in the extent and depth of the knowledge of nature will never transcend the height and moral culture of Christianity as it shines and glows in the person of Christ." Rosseau, the skeptic, says: "What sweetness, what purity in His manner! What an affecting gracefulness in His delivery! What sublimity in His maxims! What profound wisdom in His discourses! What

presence of mind in His answers! How great the command over His passions! Where is the man, where the philosopher, who could so live and so die without weakness and without ostentation? If the life and death of Socrates were those of a sage, the life and death of Jesus were those of a God." Strauss, the merciless critic, tells us that: "Jesus represents within the sphere of religion the culmination point, beyond which posterity can never go, yea, which it cannot even equal. He remains the highest model of religion within the reach of our thoughts." Renan declares that: "Whatever may be the surprises of the future, Jesus will never be surpassed."

Thus speak those whose judgment is of the coldest intellectual sort. Now let one speak for that class, who, having loved Him, know Him best. He first calls the roll of earth's great and in all, in each, some wrong, some fault, must be forgiven:

"Ye companions of the governor-spirits grave,
Bards, and ye old bringers-down of flaming news,
From steep wall heaven, wholly malcontents,
Sweet seers and stellar visionaries all,
That brood about the skies of poesy,
Full bright ye shine, insuperable stars;
Yet if man looked hard upon you, none
With total lustre blazeth, no, not one
But hath some heinous freckle of the flesh
Upon his shining cheeks, not one but winks
His ray opaqued with intermittent mist
Of defect."

But of Jesus, the Crystal Christ, he says:

"But Thee, but Thee, thou Sovereign Seer of time,
But Thee, O Poet's Poet, O Wisdom's tongue,
But Thee, O man's best Man, O love's best Love,
O Perfect life in perfect labour writ,
O All men's Comrade, Servant, King, or Priest,—
What *if* or *yet*, what mole, what flaw, what lapse,
What least defect, or shadow of defect,
What rumour tattled by an enemy,
Of inference loose, what lack of grace,
Even in torture's grasp, or sleep's, or death's,—
O what amiss may I forgive in Thee
Jesus, good Paragon, thou Crystal Christ?"
("*The Crystal Christ*," *by Sidney Lanier.*)

It should be carefully noted that this praise is not of exceptional virtues carried by Jesus to the highest perfection, but of harmonious exemplifications of all virtues in a perfectly symmetrical life. Other men have been made famous by single virtues while their characters have been sadly marred by corresponding moral weaknesses. This truth could be illustrated almost *ad infinitum* by citing more particularly than Lanier does, the world's heroes. There is scarcely one in the number whose fame is not marred by some "fleck or flaw." No wonder Phillips Brooks laments that "So much of the noblest life which the world has seen, dissatisfies us with its partialness; so many of the greatest men we see are great only on certain sides, and have their other sides all shrunken and flat." Abraham had faith, but he

lied; Moses was meek, but lost his temper; David was full of praise for God, but defiled his name with a nameless sin; Socrates was wanting in love for his wife and child; Aristotle and Plato were bestially sensual. And so the defense and indictment runs down all the long line of earth's greatest and best. But in Jesus, "All colours of all virtues, all hues of all graces, blend in His own pure whiteness as though He Himself were eternal, God's own blessed sunbeam."[1] To quote a merciless critic again, "It was a whole, a full, a blameless life, no piece-work, no mixture of lofty and base; it is a divine creation, in full force of largest love. . . . It is the realized ideal of God in His creation."[2]

Dr. Geikie speaks of Him thus: "It is admitted, even by those of other faiths, that He (Jesus) was at once a great teacher and a living illustration of the truths He taught." To appreciate the quality of this praise, we must remember that Jesus set the standard higher than any other teacher had ever set it, and then realized His own ideal. He fulfilled to the letter the Old Testament requirements and went beyond them in realizing His own superior ideal. He said, He came not to destroy the law or the prophets, but to fulfill them. The *law* and the *prophets;* He fulfilled the Old Testament law, as well as the Old Testament prophecy. He not only came where, when, and as the Old

[1] George Dana Boardman, in "The Problem of Jesus."
[2] Keim.

Testament said He would but during all His sojourn here, He was all it said one ought to be. He fulfilled all the predictions that referred to Him and all that the commands required of Him: He verified prophecy and exemplified law. After hearing the testimony of His accusers an enemy was compelled to say: "I find no fault in Him." And one who had the best opportunity of all to know Him said that: He "did no sin neither was guile found in His mouth" (1 Peter ii. 22). Another who was close to the sources of knowledge and who best of all interpreted His life, said: "Him who knew no sin He made to be sin on our behalf" (2 Cor. v. 21).

These testimonies are from men who of all men had the acutest sense of sin, to whose enlightened consciences things innocent to others were sinful, and in whose writings no man's sins, not even their own, are excused. They would have been the first to discover and the last to condone even the appearance of sin in Jesus Christ. He fulfilled all the law and the prophets. No true prophet had spoken a truth on religion, either in the Bible or out of it, which He did not fulfill. Men have not found an utterance of the sages which Jesus did not exemplify and transcend in His teaching.

The goodness of Jesus was of the highest type. It was not a mere negative of morality or even holiness; it was positive righteousness. Other men said He did no evil. He said: "I do always those things which please Him." He was no ascetic monk shrinking away from the world's evil and its

work, but a full-blooded man, always moving breast forward upon the world's sin and disorder. His righteousness was aggressive. He was sinless and, therefore, in such robust moral health He did not fear contagion while He applied His moral hygienic to a polluted society or went to be guest of a man that was a sinner. There was no timidity in Him because there was no sin in Him. He did not live in a glass house. He did not have to be cautious lest some enemy should make some embarrassing disclosures. There was no sin which He would not attack because He practiced none.

The weight of the evidence is greatly affected by the persistent uniformity of His goodness. Sinlessness ran through the whole life of Jesus. Many of the saints were once the chief of sinners. Take Jesus Christ's life in its morning and nothing in it is so fresh and beautiful as this moral quality which ran so consistently through the whole day. It is true that there is comparatively little told us of that winsome childhood, but so far as we know it, this is the impression which it makes. And we know the details of His life, even from His advent and childhood, better than some would have us believe. Christ's life is set in the midst of more verifiable history than that of any other personage of so ancient a time. From its beginning, His life in this world was set about with historical event and local circumstance in a most remarkable manner. In this respect His life was unlike the mythological god-appearances of other religions which are with-

out chronology or topography. His mother, Mary, was a Hebrew virgin from Nazareth of Galilee. He was born in Bethlehem of Judea, in the latter part of the eighth century of the Roman calendar, and the beginning of the Christian era, in the days of Herod, during the reign of Cæsar Augustus, and when Cyrenius was Governor of Syria. He lived in Nazareth in the home of Joseph, worked as a carpenter, visited Jerusalem when He was twelve years old, even at which tender age, He was a central figure among the learned and critical of His time. Of the journeys, acts and words by the way, His stopping places, incidents of His life, the world is full of authentic household stories more numerous and familiar than all or any which are connected with the life of the greatest heroes of earth.

At no period was His life lived in a corner. It was in the full light of the famous " Augustan " age, and at the hub of religious enlightenment. Jesus did not appear in a lime-light of fabulous legends calculated to give artificial effect, but in the clear light of historical day, and in it exhibited the moral qualities that were in Him and made revelation of God.

His life was a consistent whole, the exception of all lives, as much in His childhood as in His manhood. He has not been so often thought of in this way, but He was as truly the God-child as He was the God-man. From the first and throughout, His life was perfect in poise and symmetry, in balance of moral and intellectual forces, unselfish service, sensitiveness to high religious impression and duty,

moral purity and a glowing yet rational religious sentiment. What a marvel of child-life is this! By no glint into His youthful career given us by the record of those who searched for flaws in His life is there revealed a childish fault or freak. From the cradle to the cross there is harmony with the high ideal. There is no "wild oats" in His youth and young manhood. The fullest flush of vigorous youth corresponds with the closing hours of that life as it emerges from the upper room at the last supper discoursing with the disciples while He entered the shadows of Gethsemane. Indeed, there is not discoverable even the slightest incongruity between the moral tone of His post-resurrection life and any other moment we may select for comparison. While He was perfectly human, there was found in Him nothing unbecoming a God. There is not a foible or a fault, not a momentary lapse in word or deed, not one thing which could mar the dignity or the holiness of His life or suggest a weakness.

And so, by this revelation of Deity, fundamentally and infinitely, Christianity is separated from all other religions. "A religion is true or false as it embodies true conceptions of God, and the relation of man to Him. . . . All the great religions of the world contain some truth concerning religion. But the various religions have not attained to truth, that is, in accordance with reality in their conceptions of God and the relation of men to Him, and in this fundamental sense they are not true re-

ligions. They more or less mislead the religious nature to satisfy it. Christianity claims to be the true religion in the sense that it correctly sets forth the real God and rightly declares the relation to Him."[1]

The Unitarians' view of Jesus, while seeking to exalt the old Monotheism, impinges it in a way that the evangelical faith does not. If Jesus was not God but just mere man *par excellence*, the Unitarians not only convict Evangelicals of idolatry but by a strange doctrine of divinity in all men, which they deduce from their view of Christ, make all good men rivals of Deity; whereas, Evangelicals accept the unique and perfect Divinity of Jesus, and hold with the Jews to the unity of the Godhead.

The proof is submitted. The sinlessness of Jesus gives credibility to His claims to Divinity. "Admit His sinlessness and all the rest goes with it. We hear Him and obey Him and believe Him and know Him to be our Redeemer and our Lord."[2]

To state comprehensively the uniqueness of the Christ of Scripture and Christian faith, He is, prophetically, the Messiah of the Jews; historically, the Sinless Man; professedly, the Son of God; officially, Christ, the Anointed of God; mediatorially the Redeemer and Saviour of sinners; eventually, man's Judge; finally, King of kings; and essentially and eternally, God.

[1] "An Outline of Christian Theology," by W. N. Clark, p. 3.

[2] "The Churches' One Foundation," by W. Robertson Nicoll, pp. 127–128.

III

DEITY SUFFERING ON BEHALF OF HUMANITY —THE DOCTRINE OF THE ATONEMENT

WE will not cumber space with an elaboration or even an enumeration of all the various theories of the Atonement, or more exactly theories of the death of Christ; for some of these theories do not embrace anything that can properly be called the Atonement. The Example theory held by the Unitarians, for instance, does not in any real sense include the idea of Atonement. The Moral Influence theory, which has varied phases, draws a little nearer, but not near enough to be called a theory of the Atonement. Especially is this true of the Ritschlianism.

While, therefore, a discussion of the theories of the Atonement is beyond our purpose, we take occasion to say that the title prefixed to this chapter presupposes a recognition of a full atonement, and therefore, so far as it suggests a theory, it also warrants a free use of such words as *substitutionary*, *vicarious*, *expiatory* and *propitiatory*. These words suggest the incomparable merit of the death of Jesus and distinguish it from every other death, as it distinguishes Christianity from every other religion. Such positive statement does not presuppose a failure to recognize mystery

in the cross. There is mystery there, profound and unfathomable. We do not know all about His death. Our human reason staggers before the anomaly of the ages. But it is just because we recognize our inability to comprehend all its significance, that we do not think well of these human theories of the Atonement. We know nothing of the transcendent and superhuman purpose and meaning of that death, except what Supernatural Wisdom has told us. Therefore, we frame no theory, but, rather, take the Old Testament and the New Testament record so far as it explains that death, and further than that, dare not speculate.

So much as we have said here, the Scriptures plainly teach, not in one passage but in many. "But He was wounded for our transgressions, He was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon Him; and with His stripes we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way; and Jehovah hath laid on Him the iniquity of us all" (Isa. liii. 5–6). "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give His life a ransom for many" (Matt. xx. 28). "I lay down My life for the sheep" (John x. 15). "But God commendeth His own love towards us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Rom. v. 8). "For I delivered unto you first of all that which also I received: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 3). "Him who knew no sin, He made to be sin on our behalf; that we

might become the righteousness of God in Him" (2 Cor. v. 21). "Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become accursed for us" (Gal. iii. 13). "Now once at the end of the ages hath He been manifested to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself" (Heb. ix. 26). "The blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7). "And they sang a new song, saying, worthy art Thou to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for Thou wast slain, and didst purchase unto God with Thy blood men of every tribe, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. v. 9). It is hard to understand how a humble and reverent mind, willing to yield the pride of intellect to the authority of the Word of God, can find in these passages anything less than a vicarious and expiatory substitution.

Such an interpretation of Christ's death exhibits the closest harmony between the Old Testament sacrifices and the death of Christ in the relation of type and anti-type.[1] Of this view, Dr. David Foster Estes says, "The view of the atonement which is at once Scriptural and orthodox is built upon the experiences and convictions of the holy men of old in whom it is generally recognized that the Spirit peculiarly wrought: it answers to the aspirations which sacrifice universally expressed: it is buttressed by the intuitions, the fears, the hopes, embodied

[1] For the statements of the pro and con views on this point, the reader is referred to Denney's "Death of Christ," Chapters I and II, and Sabatier's "Modern Culture," pp. 21–29.

in those masterpieces of literature in all the ages which have dealt with the tragedy of sin: it is confirmed by the reasonings of the greatest philosophers and theologians: it dries the tears of the penitents: it has inspired the greatest and most impassioned songs of our hymnody: it constantly incites saints to greater saintliness: it comforts life and soul not in life only, but in death's dread hour: in all this the thought of Christ reconciling God and the world by bearing the sin of the world on the cross proves its ethical power to be incomparably great." [1]

Here is a significant fact set forth by Professor Harnack: "Let us first consider the idea that Jesus' death on the cross was one of expiation. . . . In the first place bear in mind a fact in the history of religion which is quite universal. Those who looked upon this death as a sacrifice soon ceased to offer God any blood sacrifice at all. . . . Further, wherever the Christian message subsequently penetrated, the sacrificial altars were deserted and the dealers in sacrificial beasts found no more purchasers. If there is one thing certain in the history of religion, it is that the death of Christ put an end to all blood sacrifices. . . . His death has the value of an expiatory sacrifice, for otherwise it would not have strength to penetrate into that inner world in which the blood sacrifices originated; but it was not a sacrifice in the same sense of the others, or else it could not

[1] *Review and Expositor*, October, 1909, pp. 618–619.

have put an end to them; it suppressed them by settling accounts with them. Nay, we may go further; the validity of all material sacrifices was destroyed by Christ's death." [1]

This is but a corroboration of the writer of the Hebrews: "For the law having a shadow of the good things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? Because that the worshippers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. But in those sacrifices there is a remembrance again made of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats can take away sins. Wherefore when He cometh unto the world, He saith, sacrifice and offering Thou wouldst not, but a body Thou hast prepared Me: in burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin Thou hast had no pleasure. Then said I, Lo I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me,) to do Thy will, O God: Above when He said, sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and offering for sin Thou wouldst not, neither hadst pleasure therein; which are offered by the law; then said He, Lo, I come to do Thy will, O God. He taketh away the first, that He may establish the second. By the which will we are sanctified by the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all. And every priest standeth daily ministering and offering oftentimes

[1] "What is Christianity?" pp. 168–169

the same sacrifice, which can never take away sins: but this man after He had offered one sacrifice for sins forever sat down on the right hand of God; from henceforth expecting till His enemies be made His footstool. For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified. Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that He had said before, this is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them; and their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. Having, therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus by a new and living way which He hath consecrated for us through the veil, that is to say His flesh, and having an high priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water" (Heb. x. 1–23). How convincing the fact of such mutual corroboration of history and inspiration, and how glorious this crowning and unique act is shown to be! All other sacrifices were but types of this one and were made obsolete by it.

It is this view when preached that produces the most satisfactory results, while the ineffectiveness of some of the theories in the field of evangelism is a fair test of them. The Example theory, for instance, as preached by Unitarians, makes few con-

verts. Dr. Denney aptly remarks: "An atonement which does not regenerate . . . is not an atonement in which men can be asked to believe."[1]

And, again, the reverent scholarship of the world is more and more turning to the vicarious view of the Atonement as the most apparent interpretation of the Scriptures and are setting it forth in an incomparable literature. Among the books of recent years which deal with the subject, those which advocate this theory preponderate in numbers and quality and are even better than any of their predecessors which support the same view. Denney has almost eclipsed Dale, indeed in thoroughgoing exegesis, he has perhaps surpassed him and all others, while Dr. Strong, whose systematic theology is the crowning effort of men in dealing with the "Queen of Sciences," has cast the weight of his masterful thought on this side of the controversy, and Drs. Forsyth, Clow, Mabie and others increase the weight of scholarship in favour of a real Atonement.

On the other hand, no really great book has lately appeared in the defense of any of the other theories. The Moral Influence theory, which is the closest rival of the substitutionary interpretation, seems to have had its last great advocate in this country in Dr. Bushnell. Men will think on a theme so great as this, and finding that it transcends thought, will more and more turn to the proper source of knowledge, the Word of God, and this makes their thinking great.

[1] "The Atonement and the Modern Mind," p. 63.

The death of Jesus Christ is the most important event that has occurred in the history of the human race or of God's concern for this planet, and a wrong conception of its significance is the most fatal blunder that a human being ever made. To miss the meaning of Jesus' death is to be without a gospel at all, either to preach or believe. It is a matter of far greater importance than merely understanding it for truth's sake; it is the crucial question of eternal life. It is by faith in Christ's death as endured for our sins that one is saved. "Whom God set forth to be a propitiation through faith in His blood to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime" (Rom. iii. 25). To fail of faith in the blood is to fail of forgiveness.

> "I must needs go home by the way of the cross,
> There's no other way but this;
> I shall ne'er get sight of the gates of light,
> If the way of the cross I miss."

Properly interpreted, it is the most fruitful and the only saving theme for the minister. There are more salvation sermons in Denney's characterizations of "the doctrine of the death of Jesus" as "the centre of gravity in the Christian world," and "the redeeming virtue of the gospel," "the hiding-place of God's power," "the inspiration of all Christian praise," "the first and fundamental thing in the gospel," "and the foundation of the Christian religion," "the one hope of sinful men," than any man can preach in a lifetime. If as Mr. Lepel

Griffin says in his appreciation of Sikhism and the Sikhs, "No creed indures, the foundation stones of which have not been cemented with blood," [1] it is also certainly true that Christianity must suffer decay if it lose sight of the precious blood of Christ as God's efficacious remedy for sin. This is a natural result.

Weakness here indicates weakness at every point in an evangelical gospel—a sentimental moral justice, a trifling view of sin, an incarnated divinity rather than an incarnate Deity, etc. Thoughtful students of the subject generally see this. "Any theory which limits itself to an influence upon men of the death of Christ evades some of the great realities, guilt, penalty, pardon, or deals with them in a partial manner." [2] "It is a common idea that Socinianism (or Unitarianism) is especially connected with the denial of the Incarnation. It began historically with the denial of the Atonement. It is the denial of the Atonement that it always begins anew, and it cannot be too clearly pointed out that to begin here is to end, sooner or later, with putting Christ out of the Christian religion altogether." [3] "Both writers (Albrecht Ritschl and MacCloud Campbell) practically eliminate what is most distinctly associated with Atonement in both Old and New Testaments. Both appear to have been comparatively insensible to the element of sin which we call guilt, and, therefore,

[1] "Great Religions of the World," p. 149.

[2] David Foster Estes in the *Review and Expositor*, October, 1909.

[3] "Death of Christ," by Denney, p. 320.

they were unsympathetic to the process by which it is taken away."[1]

The death of Christ, God's Son, is a solitary instance in the biography of the gods, "the sublimest moment in the moral history of God."[2] No other god, to whom is attributed the strength to protect himself, ever consented to suffer in the stead of a sinful and helpless humanity. Gods were slain by gods through enmity, as the Egyptian Osiris was slain by Set, but there is no example of a god volunteering for death at the hands of men for the good of mankind. The heathen heroes surpass the heathen gods; for heathen literature furnishes some of the most beautiful examples of the self-sacrifice of friend for friend. The gods had good times. They had gala-days, were libidinous, enjoyed festivals of pleasure and exemption from mortal need. So much were they absorbed in their own affairs, that one of the heathen poets complained that "the gods decree to wretched men to live in pain and woe, but they themselves are griefless."

This gospel of the voluntary suffering of the Son of God for the sake of sinful mankind, is the very essential heart of the gospel, but the nearer one gets to it, the further he finds himself removed from the heart of every other religion. In moral maxims and precepts, there is, it is admitted, some ground common to all the great religions, but these do not touch the vitalizing centre of religion, the

[1] James Stalker, D. D., in "The Atonement," p. 120.
[2] Dale.

suffering of Christ on the behalf of men. Christlieb calls the Atonement "the specific novelty in the teaching of Christ and the apostles." It was something so new, that men were startled when they understood what had happened. There is not a suggestion of this in any other religion. The great truth is not even counterfeited as some other Christian truths are, the incarnation, for example. It stands a solitary pyramid on the plains of human history. The pagan myths so laboriously exploited by Dr. Frazer in "The Golden Bough" exhibit to the serious and conscientious student a measureless contrast with the Christian doctrine of the Atonement and not a comparison at all. Nothing less than disingenuous genius could discover in them a sufficient likeness to warrant a comparison.

As Canon McCulloch has shown, even these dissimilar myths did not exist among the Jews, among whom and through whom Christianity was originated, but were so much abhorred by them that Christ's Jewish disciples could hardly be expected to concoct a story based on them.[1] How much less probable the theory when we reflect that upon this doctrine these disciples risked the success of their enterprise and for it sacrificed fortune and life! The tales from Euripides, translated by Prof. Gilbert Murray, and made so much of by Sir Oliver Lodge[2] are equally without pertinence in this great matter, and no one who did not want to make a case

[1] "Religion and the Modern Mind," p. 84.

[2] "Science and Immortality," pp. 199–200.

against evangelical Christianity would have resorted to their use as an argument.

So alien is this truth of Christianity to all other religions that it has been the chief source of offense in Christianity. The superstitious heathen and the irreligious philosopher alike have found here their chief objection to the gospel. Men, who do not gainsay the high social ethics and the incomparable effects of Christianity, dissent when we name the blood. This offends human reason and pride. The religionist and the philosopher are displeased with it because it leaves absolutely no place for their systems in the main work of religion. To the Jewish sects and to the Greek philosophers, the preaching of Paul, which lodged the efficacy and power of the gospel in the cross, that gospel was offensively novel and radically unique. The cross transcended the rites of one and the reason of the other, and became a stumbling-block to the Jew and foolishness to the Greek. The fact of Christ's death is so isolated that it cannot be understood except by experimental knowledge of its reality and efficacy. "For you therefore that believe is the preciousness: but for such as disbelieve the stone which the builders rejected, the same was made the head of the corner; and, a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offense" (1 Peter ii. 7–8). "The offense of the cross" has become a proverb. Men have opposed it, denied its power, necessity and historicity, ridiculed it as "murder," a "slaughter," and in various and malignant ways sought to defeat the gospel which

offers it as the hope of the world. Even a man of Sir Oliver Lodge's reputed scholarship and advantages for culture and refinement is so exasperated by the evangelical doctrine of the Atonement that he caricatures it with such inelegant terms as "the shambles," "barbarian," "pagan," "crude materialism," "blasphemy," and the man who avails himself of its benefits, a "cur." The moral obtuseness which such language exhibits needs not to be pointed out. This is but another of the many cases which illustrate how the cross is still the offense to the world and thereby proves that in design and character it transcends human wisdom. But though it be to some a stumbling-block and to others foolishness, it is to them that believe the power of God and the wisdom of God,—such a power and such a wisdom as cannot be approached by any other religion. The Atonement is so fundamental in Christianity and all other religions and philosophies are so devoid of anything like it, that no compromise between them is possible if this doctrine is admitted to be true. This wounds the pride of the religious devotee and outrages the reason of the boastful thinker. The intrinsic efficacy and glory of Christianity are found in an exclusive and peculiar Christian doctrine which actually demonstrates its moral value in effects which none can gainsay or duplicate. All other human theories are inane and contemptible in comparison. This is more than "unaided human nature" can bear, hence the offense of the cross.

We cannot forbear quoting Dr. Denney again. "If it is antagonism which is roused in the mind by Atonement, it is an antagonism which feels that everything is at stake. The Atonement is a reality of such sort that it can make no compromise. The man who fights it, knows that he is fighting for his life, and puts all his strength in the battle. To surrender is to literally give up himself, to cease to be the man he is, and to become another man. For the modern mind, therefore, as for the ancient, the attraction and the repulsion of Christianity are concentrated at the same point; the cross of Christ is man's only glory, or it is his final stumbling-block."[1]

The moral dynamic of the cross is unequalled and unrivalled. It has lifted men to a moral plane so far above that on which others move as to constitute a distinct civilization. The words of Jesus "I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto Myself" (John xii. 32) is demonstrated in all the history of Christianity by the moral elevation to which Christianity lifts society when the cross is given its true evangelical place in the ministry of any times or country. That, which the crucifiers of Christ did in ignorance and the preachers of Christ crucified do in love, has let loose convulsing energies in a world of moral turpitude. The earthquakes rending the rocks and the resurrections at the hour of His death were fit types of the moral revolutions which should attend the preach-

[1] "The Atonement and the Modern Mind," pp. 15–16.

ing of His death everywhere. Men who preach this doctrine have been accused of turning the world upside down. Guilt of the charge is excusable since this is what the world needed and nothing else could accomplish it.

Christianity must forever remain unique, distinguished by this glorious fact, and at last victorious in the power of the Scriptural explanation of it, the evangelical doctrine of the Atonement. The world has a sense of need of that propitiation which is alone provided in the gospel of the crucified Saviour. That modern culture finds no substitute for Christ, but gains a clearer view of the world's need of Him who died to save, let one speak who is qualified both by scholarship and broad sympathies to do so. The study of the philosophy and history of religion, says Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall, "while it has dissolved many prejudices, corrected many misapprehensions and brought many admirable facts, touching the religious life of races beyond the confines of Christianity, has most clearly shown the point at which the great non-Christian faiths stop short of power for the thoroughgoing transformation of character, which is salvation. They contain no central personality, morally adequate to deal with the conscience, with the heart, with the will. They have no world-Saviour to offer. They are without the vitality that can give life to the soul, dead in trespasses and sins. The more attentively we study them, estimating their fitness to minister to the religious needs of man, the more

obvious becomes their moral inadequacy. They have their heroes and their saints, their prophets and their sages, but they have no one to take the place of Jesus Christ, the Saviour of the world."[1] Dr. A. M. Fairbairn says: "This mode (as a substitution) of conceiving His death is so integral, alike to the history and thought of the New Testament, as to deserve to be termed its organizing idea, but it is so singular as to be without any parallel in the ideas and customs either of those natural religions which make the most of sacrifice, or of those natural religions which we are accustomed to compare as historical with the Christian."[2]

The world needs the Atoning Saviour and no one but the friends of Christianity have such a Saviour to give.

"There is no reason to think that anything similar has ever occurred or will ever occur again in the annals of eternity. It stands amidst the lapse of ages and the waste of worlds, a single and solitary monument."[3] In spite of all that other religions and all the philosophers can do, the world is doomed if it is not told and persuaded to believe that there is hope in the cross whereon Deity suffered on behalf of humanity.

"Apart from the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Heb ix. 22).

[1] "Universal Elements of Christian Religion," pp. 195–196.

[2] Fairbairn in the "Philosophy of the Christian Religion," p. 482.

[3] Robt. Hall in Sermon on Substitution.

"The blood of Jesus His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

"And in none other is there salvation: for neither is there any other name under heaven given among men wherein we must be saved" (Acts iv. 14).

IV

THE MORAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL—THE DOCTRINE OF THE NEW BIRTH

"HOW remarkable is the doctrine of Regeneration, *per se*, as it is stated in the New Testament! Now this doctrine is one of the distinctive notes of Christianity." Thus wrote the late George Romanes, brilliant scientist, during those repentant but peaceful months of his approaching death; and it is a discriminating remark. There is nothing like this doctrine or similar to it in any other religion, while it is fundamental to Christianity. Christianity will cease to be Christianity when it loses it and other religions become Christian when their votaries experimentally possess it. Christianity does not consist in moral maxims, however it may excel in these, nor in social ethics, however it may surpass others in their exemplification, but, fundamentally and essentially, it does in important part consist in the moral transformation of men and women by personal faith in Jesus Christ. This doctrine which is determinant of the whole moral value of Christianity, is held in solitary proprietorship by Christianity, and, as a test of the religious question,

rules all men out of the kingdom of God who do not experience it. In Jesus' interview with Nicodemus the issue was forced between Christianity and the best of all non-Christian religions on this very point, and Jesus closed all controversy with the solemn, "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again he cannot see the kingdom of God." To this honourable interviewer and exceptional representative of this best of all non-Christian faiths, He spoke personally and with directness and emphasis saying, "Ye must be born again." Even Judaism and a most honest and devout Jew must stand without the pale of salvation and be denied the privileges of the kingdom of God until entrance is sought *via pœnitentæ* and spiritual regeneration. No other religion stipulates such terms and provides such an initiation. To become a Mohammedan, for example, one needs but to admit that "there is no god but God and that Mohammed is His prophet." To become a Christian one must submit to a radical moral transformation.

Christianity is a life and must begin with a birth. If it were a creed or a philosophy only an intellectual formula would hold the gates of entrance, but it is a life and bound by the laws of life, it must begin as all life does, with individual birth; and beginning thus, it separates itself and distinguishes itself from all other religious creeds, all human and intellectual philosophies, and stands amidst the ages the sole champion of this revolutionary and rejuvenating experience of human life. It is a doctrine

as peculiar to Christianity as it is fundamental in it. No other religion sets forth God working in a man; all others are outside religions so far as they are religions at all. Only Jesus has said, "The kingdom of God is within you," as only He has said, "Except a man be born again, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."

This doctrine of the New Birth is the key to another doctrine which "the modern mind" thinks the world is much in need of, but which the same modern mind has often misstated, namely, the doctrine of God's Fatherhood. This doctrine is a trophy which the victorious Christ brought the race and belongs alone to the Christian's inventory. It too is a Christian truth. The declarations about divinities found in other religions do not comport with the attribute of Fatherhood. They do not reveal a nature which could stand in this relationship of Fatherhood as they do not provide a way by which man may come into the relation of sonship.

The times call loudly for discrimination in the use of the word "Fatherhood." It has certainly suffered great violence on the lips of the sentimental orator of our day. The grandiloquent use of this word has become fashionable; and that is a dangerous condition for religious truth. If the doctrine of Fatherhood has any meaning in it worth while at all, if it is not a mere metaphor, a rhetorical cajolery, certainly, if it is as glorious as some who would be thought broad and liberal and the instructors of feebler minds are endeavouring to

make us believe, then correct definition is the thing to be prized. There is more than a lurking suspicion that the effort to make it mean more, I ought to say less, than it signifies in the Scripture is due primarily, not to grasp of fuller truth but to a lax and latitudinarian regard for doctrine altogether. Certainly the fatality of a wrong view of Fatherhood is that it fosters a wrong attitude towards other vital and essential Christian doctrines. Those who have popularized a liberal doctrine of fatherhood also deny the divinity of Christ, evangelical views of inspiration and of the Atonement. The Unitarians are the sponsors for all of these heresies. And yet the Scriptural doctrine of Fatherhood cannot possibly find a place in Unitarianism: for there can be no such thing as a child of God but by the Holy Spirit whose person and office the Unitarians reject. Professor Cooper has shown that Judaism and Mohammedanism, the two religious families which represent in a great way this unity artificially held by Unitarians have in them no place for fatherliness as an attribute of Deity. So a discussion of the New Birth may well afford an opportunity for remarks upon the doctrine of Fatherhood.

The new birth is indeed the key to a correct view of Fatherhood. Birth, sonship and fatherhood, taken naturally, presuppose procreation. Nothing but the most tortuous wrenching of language can make less of them. Those who spread the term Fatherhood over the race of sinners and saints

alike, instead of confining it to the spiritual household of God, rob the word of its fullness, pauperize sonship and minimize the doctrine of the New Birth. These ideas stand together for sublime fundamentals of Christian doctrine and experience, presuppose each other and are mutually dependent, and are too rich for any other faith or philosophy to duplicate. Scriptural Fatherhood holds in itself the deepest and highest Christian experiences. To hold out to men in their sins the hope of Fatherhood without the experience of the begotten life is to cheat them of their highest blessing and disappoint Deity's passion for paternity. God craves the privilege of spiritual parentage. "God as Father wants to make and keep a straight line of spiritual heredity from Himself to us."[1]

The Fatherhood of God taught by Christ and the New Testament writers is not so much an attribute as a relationship. It connects God's nature with man's. It is more than love, that is, attitude; God loves all men, but "The love of God is the readiness for Fatherhood," which love waxes many-fold towards His begotten child who loves Him. Fatherhood is that new dignity which a birth brings to parent and child. It designates the sublimest fact in spiritual religion. In regeneration God becomes Father and the converted sinner "begotten of God," "born again," becomes "a new creature," a "babe," a "son," a "new man." The truth must not be obscured that regeneration is a

[1] See Clark's "Philosophy of Christian Experience," p. 80, etc.

creative or generative act on God's part and an experience on man's part. It is the life man receives in the act of regeneration more than any superintending care or universal benignity that makes that experience momentous. Both mark a privilege which belongs to a Christian only. Regeneration is the profoundest experience of the soul in all its course between the gates of natural life and physical death.

The man who squeezes the doctrine of regeneration out of the word "Fatherhood," has wrought disaster upon many souls. There is no such thing as spiritual life without spiritual birth. Huxley says, "No claim to biological nationality is valid except birth."[1] Henry Drummond elaborates this in "Natural Law in the Spiritual World." Jesus says, "That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the spirit is spirit" (John iii. 6). Huxley corroborates Jesus. Science affirms the principle in the realm of the physical; theology affirms it in the realm of spirit. "As many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the sons of God" (John i. 12). Such only are His sons and to such only is He Father. The man who fails to receive Him forfeits even the possibility of sonship. Men are radically differentiated according as they become Christian or remain non-Christian: "He that hath the Son hath life and he that hath not the Son of God hath not life" (John v. 12). Henry

[1] "Advance of Science," p. 120.

W. Clark's thoughtful book, "The Philosophy of the Christian Experience," quoted above shows the essential place of regeneration in the evolutionary process for those who hold that view of things. The New Testament is so absolutely original at this point as to be almost startling, yet it is more and more evident that the last word of science will corroborate the Scriptures on this distinguishing doctrine.

Of course God is the Creator, the merciful Benefactor of all men, and His good providences are over all; but He is not, as the oratorical wheedler implies, Father in any such sentimental sense as to constitute a doctrine which feeds the self-complacency of the world-lover who neither knows nor cares for the regenerating work of His Holy Spirit, trusts to the Atonement which Christ made on the cross, nor bears a cross for Christ. Jesus taught that in order to "be the children of your Father which is in heaven" we must love and endure the hate and the hurt of those who are not His children but the children of the devil (Matt. v. 44–47). "Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty" (2 Cor. vi. 17–18). The children of God are those whom He has "predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ" through whom such have "access by one Spirit unto the Father" and become thereby "fellow citizens with the saints of the household of

God." Others are "dead in trespasses and sins," they "walk according to the course of this world," they are "the children of wrath," "without Christ being aliens" (Eph. ii.). Jesus and the Father are one (John x. 30). The man who refuses to have Christ for Saviour refuses to have God for Father. He is without God and without hope in the world (Eph. ii. 12). No man knows the Father but he to whom the Son reveals Him (Luke x. 22).

This doctrine goes to the roots of moral being as no ethic, no culture, no social science nor legal statute can ever go. The springs of moral behaviour are reached by the Holy Ghost in the operation by which He effects the new birth, yea, the very genesis of character is reached in this supernatural work. "Conversion is the re-constituting of our moral being. Salvation means being new-born."[1] Regeneration does not consist in a man's changing his mind so much as in having his heart changed; not so much in a reformation of outward conduct as an inward transformation. It is less a voluntary act on man's part than an omnipotent act on God's part. Regeneration is God's work and man's experience. "Sonship does not consist in ethical likeness only, but also in a change wrought in the nature and character by direct agency of God, which is the antecedent and cause of ethical likeness to God."[2]

There is a background of dark, deep human

[1] Clark, "Philosophy of the Christian Experience," p. 73.

[2] Professor Alexander in "The Son of Man," p. 195.

depravity to this Christian doctrine of the New Birth. Whatever be one's theory, there is no fact of human life more characteristic of the entire race than this of wrong moral condition. Says Clark in his "Philosophy of the Christian Experience," "It is a matter of common acknowledgment that somehow or other, human life has missed its way."[1] The religion which takes a superficial account of the universal fact of sin, common to the experience of every moral creature, and by which all men have missed the mark is extremely defective; it cannot possibly be the religion which the race or any part of it needs. Christianity alone has a thoroughgoing doctrine of sin as it alone has a remedy for it. The fact of sin indicates the chief need for religion. Historians, theologians and philosophers agree as to the fact. Aristotle recognizes it in his doctrine of "The slope," in which he treats of the awful gravitation of appetite and passion. Plato speaks of the "wild beast of all that is within me." Pascal says, "We are born in unrighteousness," and Kant recognizes the indwelling of an "evil principle." Shakespeare, philosopher as well as poet, says, "All is oblique: there is nothing level in our accursed nature." Tennyson "finds a baseness in his blood." It was a distinguished jurist who said, "If those who preach had been lawyers previous to entering the ministry, they would know and say more about the depravity of the human heart than they

[1] Page 20.

do."[1] Byron spoke of the "ineradicable taint of sin." The modern learning has left this awful fact unchanged, whatever theory some may propose by which to account for it or interpret it. Says Prof. William De Witt Hyde of the doctrine of original depravity, "The modern historical conception of human evolution brings it out tenfold more clear than when it was proclaimed by lonely seers like Kant and Calvin and Augustine and Paul. Sin is the most universal, the most stubborn, the most cruel, the most ineradicable element in human nature."[2] And again: "In setting itself to deal with man's moral condition, religion, therefore, addresses itself to a real and living need."[3] Some of the moderns, Sir Oliver Lodge and Dr. Charles Elliott in the company, treat sin as inconsequential or an actual benefit to man, a necessary and helpful experience. They remind one of Browning's exuberant optimism in the line "That's what all the blessed evil's for."

It is for a race of men with proclivities to sin that religion must provide help, and nothing but religion can do it. It is equally certain that Christianity is the only religion that makes such provision. Nowhere else is sin so exceedingly sinful as in Christianity, and nowhere else is the sinner provided with absolute forgiveness. Edwin

[1] See Strong's "Systematic Theology," Vol. II, pp. 580–581.

[2] "Outlines of Social Theology," p. 92.

[3] *Ibid.*, p. 4; see also page 42 "Philosophy of Christian Experience," by Fairbairn.

Arnold gives us this translation of Buddhistic wisdom:

"Away with those that preach to us the washing off of sin—
Thine ownself is the stream for thee to make ablution in;
In self-restraint it rises pure—flows clear in the tide of truth,
By widening banks of wisdom in waves of peace and truth.
Bathe there, thou son of Pandu, with reverence and rite,
For ne'er yet was water wet could wash the spirit white."
(*Proverbial Wisdom.*)

There are many echoes of this in modern thought. There is outside of Christianity no better gospel for the sinner than this. The gospel of Christ meets the case of inborn sin with its doctrine of re-birth. It starts character out of a new root. The nature of God and the nature of man both require this: "Given an eternal God, whose whole being and activity make for righteousness; and given also an immortal soul that has in itself the sense of its own unrighteousness, and one or the other must change if they are to dwell together in harmony and heaven."[1] With his nature unchanged, the nature of man's deeds could not be changed. Character colours conduct. Man's natural depravity naturally defiles his behaviour. "A good man out of a good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure bringeth forth that which is evil" (Luke vi. 45). "Who can bring a clean thing out of an unclean? Not one" (Job xiv. 14). "That which is born of flesh is flesh" (John iii. 6).

[1] D. W. Faunce, "The Christian Experience," p. 184.

There can issue no spiritual quality out of a carnal character. That religion which can give the sinner a new birth and therefore a new start, is entitled to special privileges in the competitorship for popular favour which the great religions are conducting.

Faith, that act of the soul by which this experience is procurable, is both characteristic of Christianity and divisive of men. Men come into this experience of the new birth by personal faith in Christ alone. This doctrine of faith is as exclusively Christian as is the New Birth. No other religion has anything like it and no man can become a Christian without it. "Without faith it is impossible to please God" (Heb. xi. 6). "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God" (Rom. x. 17). "There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. iv. 5). That faith is personal repose of the soul on the Christ. No other sort of faith can bring to one that experience of the new birth which makes him a Christian. This evangelical truth is the treasure-trove of the Christian. Faith looks for merit to Christ and not man, and foreign to it are all oracles, shrines and sacerdotalisms. "Its antithesis is the work which creates merit, the action which establishes a claim to reward; but its correlative is grace, the spontaneous energy of the God who made man for Himself, effecting His conscious appropriation by the man He made.

"Now faith so understood, is an idea most characteristic of the Christian religion; in no other

does it hold the same place or fulfill the same function. . . . The Christian was the first religion, as a religion, to say that custom has no worth, that work has no merit, that the only thing that can avail before God is the righteousness He gives and faith receives. . . . Hence Christianity, in making faith the subjective pivot of religion, separated itself from uniform and invariable custom, boldly made itself independent of usage and institution and brought the individual and the absolute God face to face. It was the only mode in which a religion of universal ideas could have been realized by universal man."[1]

And yet while discarding human merit, this experience of the new birth which faith instrumentally secures begets an order of moral excellencies peculiarly its own, and which far exceed the mere ethical elements in human conduct. This is a glorious paradox. The worldly-wise philosopher is sorely perplexed by it. Perfect morality, as has been shown, is a standard impossible of attainment without moral transformation, but society calls for something even superior to morality. The ideal character is not fulfilled by a perfect and rigid morality. Morality must be infused with a certain spiritual tone which mellows it, a certain temper which adorns it. Christianity alone imparts this. The student of religion must distinguish between *virtues* and *graces*. Christianity has added

[1] A. M. Fairbairn, "Philosophy of the Christian Religion," pp. 548–559.

the latter to the world's inventory of personal and social values. The moralist is a stranger to such adornments as humility, meekness and such like. These latter are Christian social accomplishments. A man may have virtues, but these do not of themselves make one an ideal member of a spiritual society. A man may be truthful, honest, sober, indeed boast, as usually the moralist will, of a long catalogue of virtues, and yet be an undesirable companion to finer souls. He may be cold, stiff, severe and uncongenial. Christianity supplies the deficiency of such characters. It adds to the virtues, which it exhibits as no other religion does, the graces, of which it is the sole dispenser. "Whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honest, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely and whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue," Christianity sets them forth as they were never seen before; but to these, it imparts a peculiar Christian spirit which warms character and makes it winsome. To those who are "partakers of the divine nature" by regeneration, it adds "To virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge temperance; and to temperance patience; and to patience godliness; and to godliness brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness charity" (2 Peter iv. 7). A man's virtue and honesty and truthfulness have finer quality if he is a Christian. The Christian graces of patience, godliness, brotherly kindness and charity intone the virtues and give them Christian social manners. The graces

which fit men and women for heavenly citizenship qualify them also for the richest social fellowship. It is not a matter of surprise that those religions which are impotent to produce these graces necessarily fail to produce a high order of civilization and society. The Christian graces impart social harmony to the exalted moral virtues which Christianity fosters. Thus honesty becomes merciful, benevolent, philanthropic, and the truth is spoken in love.

And these graces are the direct result of the operation of God in regeneration and the subsequent work of the regenerating Spirit. They are not found in lives where there has been no experience of divine grace. The graces which bless the lives of others are themselves produced by that grace which saves a man. Regeneration heightens the moral quality and value of a man. How often have we met with unlovableness and social unprofitableness in men who were moral beyond the prevailing standards of their community. That in them which properly tuned would have attracted and blessed all men repelled you. The chords of virtue were harsh and their sympathies were sluggish. Their morality was obtrusive and they were proud, boastful, self-satisfied, and indifferent to or even intolerant of the morally weak and unfortunate, the very opposite of a humble, meek and prayerful spirit. The uncongeniality of haughty self-righteousness is only exceeded by loathsome depravity. The two need alike regenerating grace

of God to fit them for the society of the pure and humble here and that which we hope to enjoy in the heavenly land. As Henry Drummond says, "The soul was made to be converted" and until it is converted it is as far from the possibilities of manhood as the worm in the chrysalis is from the butterfly. Edward Everett Hale, Jr., the best product of distinguished parentage and intellectual culture found in himself a need and experienced a change which he afterwards declared that he discovered to be the need of the outcast and offscouring of our social order for whom his experience of grace had begotten a loving solicitude and made him their friend and helper. Regeneration is the need of the race, and it is not produced nor enjoyed outside of Christianity and without personal faith in Christ. The religion of the future will contain the essence of Christianity and possess the power to beget this experience.

V

THE MORAL INVIGORATION OF THE INDIVIDUAL—THE DOCTRINE OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

THE supreme value of Christianity lies in the fact that it exactly meets human need. In a high and worthy sense, it is utilitarian. It meets the practical necessities of men and renders actual present service. It came forth from its founder, equipped with certain qualities and potentialities which peculiarly fit it for human ministries. It is distinguished by a certain vital and vitalizing quality suited to a world of moral weakness. This is a chief value and constitutes a valid argument for its universality.

That which from the first demonstrably most distinguished Christianity was its moral energy. By His mysterious power Jesus held the world in wide-eyed wonder. His personal, moral vitality was an enigma. The contagion of strength which He exhaled vitalized those who were run down in moral strength and wrought transformation in His circle. Victims of sin and misfortune had their maladies rebuked by His almighty word and felt the instant thrill of a new and strange energy in their beings. Pentecost marked the distribution of this power among His immediate spiritual heirs, and by His will it was entailed as an inalienable

inheritance to His followers for all time. All who profess the heirship have a right to claim a full inheritance of Christ's bequest of power.

The one unanswerable argument for Christianity has been the product of this transforming spiritual energy. This divine life which attends it and inheres in it, which reinvigorates depleted moral manhood and rehabilitates the very refuse of society; this is a unique force operating wherever a pure Christianity spreads. This which characterizes it in the first Christian century still distinguishes it from all ethics, all philosophies, all æsthetic devices and emollients and from all other religions, past and present. The gospel itself is not more unique than the type of civilization which it produces. The peculiar faith begets a peculiar people (Titus ii. 4–1 Pet. ii. 9). John Tulloch's remark does not yet need revision: "Christianity," he said, "is the only vitalizing spiritual power in the world." A moral paralysis and a spiritual numbness exist everywhere outside of the sphere of Christianity's influence. Dishonesty, lying and spiritual insensibility mark the extent of the fatal sluggishness which has crept over all non-Christian peoples.

This power which Christianity alone demonstrates, and of which it is the sole dispensator, meets the race at the identical point of its greatest need. Man is not only bad; he is weak. His plight is worse than that of a sinner pleading forgiveness, though he needs that in a measure to bankrupt

every other religion in the world; he has suffered moral enervation and spiritual insensibility as an effect of his sins. Forgiveness is not, therefore, sufficient to meet his needs and enable him to satisfy the demands of his gratitude for forgiveness. If only forgiven he is as helpless as ever he was to fulfill the ideal which the Forgiver has for him. The enfeebling effects of his sin would defeat him if forgiveness were all that religion, even a religion that offers forgiveness, provided for him. Christianity, with its moral energy left out, would make man's case most discouraging; for it fixes for him a moral ideal vastly more lofty than he is elsewhere required to realize. How shall he, weak from debilitating sin, climb so high?

These considerations force to the front the superiority of Christianity as a working theory of life. If we are to approximate the ideal which comes to every man whose spiritual nature is genuinely aroused, even for a moment, we know there must be found "a power not ourselves that makes for righteousness." Some great good physician must demonstrate a wondrous skill in us or the fatal palsy of sin in our members will make of our best efforts at an upright life but a tottering and a failure.

> "'Tis life whereof our nerves are scant,
> More life and fuller that we want,
> O! life, not death, for which we pant."

Hail the self-announcement of the soul's only

Physician: "I came that they may have life and may have it more abundantly" (John x. 10). Reuss penetrates deeply into the meaning of the gospel at this point when he discovers that life is the primary idea of the apostolic conception of Christianity and declares that this idea of life was one "far surpassing any that had been expressed in the formulas of the current philosophy or theology and resting upon premises and conceptions altogether different." "The idea of life as it is conceived in this system implies the idea of power."[1] Men need moral ideals, high and fascinating ends to live for. Happy the man who dreams of lofty moral attainment, if he knows where to find resources of power for its realization: but most miserable of all men is he to whom is given the ravishing vision of sublime moral heights and is left to his own moral powers to reach them. He finds with Paul the commandment, which was ordained to life, to be unto death and his lament is that of this apostle, who not only universalized Christianity, but personalized mankind's experience: "I am carnal, sold under sin for that which I do, I know not: for not what I would, that do I practice, but what I hate, that I do. . . . Wretched man that I am!" (Rom. vii.). It was from a depth like this that he looked up and beheld the return of his vision, and exclaimed, "I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord; . . . for the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus

[1] "History of Christian Philosophy in the Apostolic Age," p. 496.

made me free from the law of sin and death; for what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin condemned sin in the flesh, that the ordinance of the law might be fulfilled in us who walked not after the flesh but after the Spirit. . . . The Spirit also helpeth our infirmity" (Rom. vii., viii.). There is no ethic like that! Christianity is the most discouraging religion in the world if a man takes nothing more of it than its moral maxims and ethical standards and sets out unaided to imitate its great Exemplar. That man who does not start from the Atonement will not progress far in Christlikeness. It is Christ Crucified that is "the power of God and wisdom of God," and is "made unto us wisdom from God and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. ii. 24–30).

Now there is an Agent who makes effectual the power inhering in and issuing from Christ's cross and His tomb—the power of His crucifixion and of His resurrection. Not the Christ living a life to be imitated, but the Christ giving a life to be appropriated lets us into the blessings of His gospel. It is the power which resides in His death and resurrection that affords us strength to live after the pattern of His life. This power was the bequest of the now departed Lord. He had riches of power and left it to us as His kinsmen and heirs. The Holy Ghost is the administrator of this bounty. "When the Comforter is come whom I

will send unto you from the Father, even the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, He shall bear witness of Me." "He shall take of Mine and shall declare it unto you. All things whatsoever the Father hath are Mine; therefore said I that He taketh of Mine and shall declare it unto you" (John xv., xvi.). "Ye shall receive power when the Holy Spirit is come upon you" (Acts i. 8).

Perhaps there is not among the unique doctrines of Christianity one more distinctively Christian nor a fact more absolutely unparalleled by other religions than this doctrine of the Holy Spirit and this consequent fact of spiritual dynamics for man's moral impotency. Judaism holds a strong faith in one God, as does also Mohammedanism, though the God of the latter is so cold and hard a sovereign as to fall a little short of a caricature of the Christian's God, who is Love. But though in their ideas of Deity these religions approach Christianity to some degree, they do not hold anything even similar to this doctrine of the Holy Spirit. It is an idea entirely foreign to every other great religion. This deficiency constitutes an unlikeness at the very point where the power of Christianity resides, the very source of the Christian's help. This fact may well account for the moral delinquencies so generally observed in these Eastern faiths.

Dr. Arthur H. Smith in his book, "The Uplift of China," pays high, some will think too high, tribute to the ethics of Confucianism and Buddhism, and then closes his review of the first with these signifi-

cant words: "But it altogether fails to recognize the essential inability of human nature to fulfill these high behests, and for this inability, it has neither explanation nor remedy. . . . Confucianism fails to produce on any important scale, the character which it commends. While it has unified and consolidated the Chinese people, it has not, as the Great Learning enjoins, renovated them, and it never can do so."[1] Of Confucianism and Buddhism combined, he says, "The moral precepts of Buddhism and Confucianism elicit our praise, but their powerlessness to uplift the people morally is evidenced by the prevalence of deceit, dishonesty, lying, mutual suspicion and the total eclipse of insincerity."[2]

Christianity presents in the Scriptures a moral standard and ethical ideal which excels Confucianism and Buddhism, when the sacred books of these cults are most charitably construed. But truth speaks loudest when it speaks by example. This standard set up in the precepts of Christianity, though excelling all others, is enforced and illustrated in a perfect personal example. Jesus practiced what He preached, and He left to His followers power for a like realization of the ideal. "Colton wrote more moral maxims than any man of his age and violated them all."[3] In his own failure, as well as in the fact that he did not bequeath to his

[1] "The Uplift of China," pp. 99–100. [2] *Ibid.*, p. 110.
[3] "Philosophy of the Plan of Salvation, by an American Citizen," p. 273.

pupils any power to realize his moral standards, Colton was like Confucius, Buddha and the rest. Not one, we may be sure, of all who have proclaimed worthy moral ideals has fulfilled them, with this one exception of the great Exemplar. In Christianity aspiring men may find the incentive and help of both the loftiest precepts and a perfect example. They may both know what manner of men they ought to be and see how they may be such men. Nothing higher and better than perfect precept wrought into perfect personal example could be conceived by human wisdom.

But this is not the last word for Christianity. Divine Wisdom goes beyond this and in "Christ crucified the power of God" makes atonement for the sins of those who have failed, and in response to faith in that death gives them a new birth and a young and fresh moral vigour; and then gives them a Helper, the Holy Spirit, who so helps their infirmities that the righteousness of perfect precept and perfect example may be fulfilled in them while they walk not after the flesh but after the Spirit.

> "Faith is the grasping of almighty power;
> The hand of man laid on the arm of God."

Let us emphasize the fact that the moral energy of Christianity constitutes a vast difference between it and heathenism, between it and philosophy, it and mere moralism. Grant to these latter the same motive and the same ideals that belong to Christianity and there would still remain the essential

difference between a method and a life. They will turn more and more to weakness and decay while Christianity will increase in stature and strength with the moral progress of the world, of which it is the vital pulse. The difference between Christianity and heathenism is far more a matter of motor than of motive. They present a contrast similar to that of two engines, one under a full head of steam and a skilled and steady hand on the throttle, the other as perfect in mechanism but "dead" and without a master. The whole New Testament throbs with the life of God in men. Henry Drummond says the "sum of New Testament doctrine is that there is an immediate action of the Spirit of God on the souls of men. In the New Testament alone, the Spirit is referred to nearly three hundred times. And the one word with which He is constantly associated is power."[1]

One of more than a few remarks which show Sir Oliver Lodge's "crudeness" as a theologian (to use a word which he overworks in his characterizations of "the clergy"), whatever be his standing as a scientist, is this: "As a matter of fact the higher man of to-day is not worrying about his sins at all, still less about their punishment: his mission, if he is good for anything, is to be up and doing." Perhaps the "higher man" "is not worrying about his sins" and can be "up and doing" even if he cannot be doing anything better than imitating this distinguished but inelegant critic in calling the man

[1] "The New Evangelism," p. 139.

who rejoices in Christ's propitiating atonement a "cur" or him who believes in original sin a "monk," but the vast majority of men and women of our race have consciences which daily torture them for their sins and whose moral weakness produced by sin is a matter of deepest consciousness and most frequent demonstration. His optimism is that of Browning, namely, that God's help and strength are for the strong. Melancthon said: "Old Adam is too strong for young Melancthon." We may imitate Epictetus and challenge these apostles of science and doctors of a new theology, as well as the devotees of the heathen religions to show us their products. "By heaven," said this old philosopher, "I long to see a Stoic! But you have not one fully developed? Show me then one who is developing; one who is approaching towards this character. Do me this favour! Do not refuse an old man a sight which he has never yet seen." Saints are not as numerous as we should like to see them, but never is there an age to which Christianity does not present samples of this exclusive product and always and everywhere it has many in the making. Many who do not count themselves perfect are nevertheless by the power of Christ's regenerating Spirit following after that they may apprehend that for which they are also apprehended of Christ Jesus, which is the highest mark ever set or attained by mortal man. Thousands of the saints, both of those made and those making, are constructed out of material which sin had first

marred and sadly spoiled. Through courses of immorality, some of them dead to self-respect and brutally, lacking in love, both for those who gave them birth and their own offspring, touched by this rejuvenating and rehabilitating power of the gospel of Christ, have been transformed into the most beautiful, most faithful and serviceable citizens. No other religion, no science, no philosophy and no other form even of Christian doctrine than the evangelical can, Sir Oliver Lodge to the contrary notwithstanding, duplicate such examples as these man for man. That is a fact which the anti-miraculous scientists, the apostles of "organized knowledge," may presently be called upon to explain.

It is his ignorance of the average man and the commonest human experiences which always disqualifies the scholastic recluse for handling the practical problems of life and for being a critic of the matters of common faith which are bound up with these problems. The educated evangelist and missionary are safer and more competent judges of the true and vital elements of evangelical faith than cloistered and erudite scholars.

Sin may indeed be overcome by "the expulsive power of a new affection," but that new affection is a gift of the Spirit. It is the Christian heritage, "because the love of God hath been shed abroad in our hearts through the Holy Spirit which was given unto us. For while we were yet weak, in due season Christ died for the ungodly" (Rom. v. 5–6).

The love and the strength are from the same source. The Christian experience is something more than sentiment or emotion. Experimental Christianity, it is true, exults in joy, love, hope, but these emotions are surcharged with persistent moral energy. The profound spiritual exhilaration of the new birth has a sequel in an increasing moral strength under the ministry of that Spirit which helps our infirmities; for "the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth." Righteousness and goodness are as far removed from a mere emotional excitement as they are from simple decorous manners. Such as these come out of a man—out of the inner life of the soul and are generated by the Spirit of God. They are the issues of the daily moral and spiritual renewing of the Spirit by which Christianity and Christianity alone fulfills Bishop Burkett's definition of religion, as "the life of God in the soul," and of which Paul speaks when he says, "that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye being rooted and grounded in love," etc. (Eph. iii. 16–17).

If Christianity is true, this is just what ought to be expected. No religion can be true which is not experienceable and which does not meet man's moral needs; which has not the power to satisfy and freshen his spiritual nature, improve his character, give him ability to resist evil, realize the

good and perform a practical neighbourly goodness. It must be his helper in realizing both a subjective and an objective goodness. Institutional religion must provide for and correspond with individual functions ; the creed must mate with man's religious nature. This is the case with Christianity. It was this harmony that Tertullian had in mind when he spoke of "the human soul which is naturally Christian." The human soul and the Christian religion are adapted to each other.

The Holy Spirit is the person in the divine Trinity who especially exerts influence, inspires understanding, communicates vitality, arouses energy, supplies force and induces activity. The love and omnipotence of God the Father, the Atonement of Christ the Redeemer are by Him made available, and He prepares the heart for their reception and intimately superintends their operation in the believer's life. Where He resides there is inner illumination, spiritual life, moral power, and religious action. The book we call "Acts of the Apostles" is the history of the first period in which the Spirit wrought in full freedom with all the materials of His administration available. He had been among men hitherto. Even when creation was young, He had moved upon the face of the waters, garnished the heavens and through the years had come "upon" representative individuals of the old Hebrew régime ; but from Pentecost He had for His use the efficient elements of the gospel. God in His love had given His Son. Jesus had taught His

potential doctrines and died making expiation for sin, had risen again vanquishing death and demonstrating immortality. The divine Administrator now comes forth furnished by these for His work and begins that wonderful career of making these effective. The results were at once manifest. Understanding is enlightened, spirits and consciences are quickened. Everywhere men get, first of all, a new sense of sin, a new view of righteousness and a new apprehension of judgment. A transforming energy attends His movements. Men are thrilled by it, and the fittest word which can be found to characterize their behaviour is *acts*—"the acts of the apostles."

"We should do scant justice to the New Testament, however, if we merely set out to expound its doctrine of the Holy Spirit. What it contains is not so much a doctrine as a consciousness, and a consciousness of indescribable richness and power. The early Church lived and moved and had its being in the living sense of the Holy Spirit as a present force. The wonderful rush of fullness and power that appears in the experiences of the day of Pentecost is a fair symbol of the characteristic experience of the age that gave us the New Testament. When we read the Epistles and observe how many works of grace and power are attributed to this divine Agent, and how incidentally and informally they are mentioned, and yet how glowingly, we see how impossible it is to formulate the doctrine that such expressions imply, and to

classify the manifold operations of the living Spirit of God as they are there represented. The Epistles were written in the very atmosphere of power. One who wishes to know what the Holy Spirit was to the early Church should read them rapidly, noting how various and how glorious are the epithets that are employed, and yielding himself to the free spirit and reverent and joyful intimacy that breathes on every page. This is the subject regarding which we can understand the New Testament only by breathing its life. It was glorious to live with a sense of present divine energy, a consciousness that God dwelt graciously within and was moving omnipotently without." [1]

More than any other religion, Christianity tells us about the origin, the nature, guilt, and the consequence of sin, and at the same time lifts up before us the highest standard of goodness ever exhibited in any system or enforced by any set of moral rules. Naturally under no other teaching are men plunged into such depths of despair. But, thank God! it is here also that man is told about atonement for sin, about forgiveness, pardon, cleansing, righteousness by faith and spiritual renewing. These words which are the native tongue of Christianity are foreign speech everywhere else. If nowhere else sin is so exceeding sinful, neither is there anywhere under heaven given among men a name like the name of Jesus whereby men may be saved from their sins, nor anywhere a precious

[1] "An Outline of Christian Theology," by W. N. Clarke, p. 372.

Holy Spirit, divine Paraclete, which name, as Dr. W. N. Clarke reminds us, means "Helper," or "Friend-in-Need."

What more fitting words can close this chapter and convince of the truth of its message than words which the Spirit Himself has inspired and which shows plainly that He is the Keeper of the gates of life; that no one can enter the living way except the Spirit lead him; that all are weak who have not the strength which He imparts; that only the life which He indwells can realize the high standards of moral excellence; that as Jesus is the only name by which men can be saved, there is not outside of Christianity another to perform the sacred functions of the Holy Spirit, and that in Him are abundant resources of power?

"If any man hath not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of His" (Rom. viii. 9).

"Except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John iii. 5).

"For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God" (Rom. viii. 14).

"For through Him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father" (Eph. ii. 18).

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism" (Eph. iv. 4–5).

"The Spirit Himself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God: and if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Rom. viii. 16–17).

"And in like manner the Spirit also helpeth our infirmity" (Rom. viii. 26).

"That He would grant you according to the riches of His glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fullness of God. Now unto Him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, unto Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations forever and ever. Amen" (Eph. iii. 16–21).

VI

IMMORTALITY DEMONSTRATED—THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS

THE thought of individual, personal, and accountable endless life is the most solemn that ever engaged the mind and heart of man. All creature comforts, personal fame or power, dwarf into insignificance before this question of living forever and facing in another world responsibility for the deeds done in this. There is no other hope, no other fear, no other awe like that which meditation upon this fact inspires. Certainty of nothing else is so much to be desired as certainty concerning our future destiny. As good as all knowledge is and as baneful as is all ignorance, a sure and rational hope of futurity is more important than any science. That religion which sounds a clear, strong, affirmative, yet hopeful note here will eventually receive the attention of all men, and all who are not hopelessly blinded by the God of this world will seek its consolations. Wu Ting Fang, the intelligent Chinese minister to the United States in 1901, bore a natural and pathetic testimony: "Christianity," he said, "owes most of its converts in China to the fact that it is more alluring than any religion we have there.

The idea of a future life is tempting to many. Confucius teaches no such doctrine. He was once asked if he believed in a future life, and he answered: 'If I don't know what will take place tomorrow, how can I know anything about a more remote future?'" Both the question propounded to Confucius and his answer to it are significant. The question indicates man's intuitive conjecture that he is immortal and that he is deeply interested in the question of immortality, while the answer is illustrative of the ignorance of non-Christian men and systems concerning this high theme. Men must know the truth about it, but no man without revelation can declare it to them.

This hope and dread of immortality is in the hearts of all men, but it is unsteady, flickers, and flares in all non-Christian creeds. Among all the widely separated and unrelated savage and infant races is found evidence of belief in a spiritual existence surviving the death of the body. The lowest African tribes, the most ignorant and superstitious American Indians, are mightily influenced by this belief. The crude belief in ghosts is a sort of faith in immortality. Ghosts are simply souls without bodies; souls of dead men and women surviving the ordeal of bodily death. These ghosts are believed to be capable of the old loves, hates, revenges of those whom they survive, and of transporting themselves rapidly at will.

Many of the polytheistic gods were human heroes immortalized. They were still creatures of the

most exuberant human passions, and were often guilty of the most flagrant sins. Like the ghosts of Negro superstition they had power and disposition to harm man, but could not be harmed by him.

> "Gods partial, changeful, passionate, unjust,
> Whose attributes were rage, revenge, and lust."

Belief in them is evidence of a blind faith in an invisible and supramundane world.

The theories of transmigration, while bearing the marks of human manufacture, indicate a conscious need and belief that death does not end all. While such a faith does not satisfy, it does give evidence of the unquenchable hope in a post-mortem existence.

There is many a striking passage bearing on this subject in the ancient Roman and Grecian classics, some affirming, some denying, and some merely raising the question, but all bearing evidence that it was in the air, a matter of popular concern. Historians, poets, and philosophers echo the popular belief. The philosophers all speculate concerning the "great mystery." A few like Plato were more confident, but even for them, the future had no substance compared with the present. "Life was here and not there." Others were oppressed with abject hopelessness. "Rather would I," says Achilles, "on earth be a serf to another, a man of little land and little substance, than be a prince over all the dead that have come to nought." And Catullus says, "Suns may set and suns may rise again, when

once our brief life has set, one unbroken night of sleep remains." [1]

While these philosophers disagree, they cannot evade and dare not despise this great question. As moths are irresistibly attracted to the candle, the philosophers are drawn to this great theme, although the deliverances of the most confident of them are not assurances, but rather "the natural guesses of thoughtful minds." They do not speak with dogmatism, and are not read with conviction. Cæsar objected to the death sentence upon Catiline for conspiracy because "death is the end of all suffering. After death there is neither pain nor pleasure." And Pliny said, "The vanity of man, and his insatiable longing after existence have led him also to dream of life after death. A being full of contradictions, he is the most wretched of creatures: since the other creatures have no wants transcending their natures. Man is full of desires and wants that reach to infinity and can never be satisfied. His nature is a lie, uniting the greatest poverty with the greatest pride. Among these so great evils, the best thing God has bestowed on man is the power to take his own life." Socrates was again more confident. He said: "You may bury me if you can catch me, but when you have buried my body, do not say that you have buried Socrates." Although it does not seem to have influenced his morals, Goethe, among the moderns, spoke forth the intuitive hope. "I have," he says, "a fine con-

[1] "Expositor's Bible," 1 Thess. iv. 13.

viction that our soul is an existence of an indestructible nature." At times, through the ages, the light flared a little and then again flickered well-nigh to the socket and a sombre gloom fell upon these great spirits depressing them with false and melancholy views of life; but still the great question would not down, though no final answer to it could be found. Dr. James Orr says, "History and literature are witnesses how little 'natural intimations of immortality' can of themselves do to sustain an assured confidence in a future conscious existence, or to give comfort and hope at the thought of entrance into it."[1]

Some modern philosophers, Mr. Balfour and Sir Oliver Lodge, for example, find ground for their conjectures of immortality in the modern theories of conservation of energy and the principle of continuity. But at best, these are but the conjectures of great minds, and we doubt not much was first read into these laws of nature before these philosophers were able to read even these conjectures out of them. The moral revelations of nature are usually nothing more than analogy founded upon religious presuppositions. Moreover, it seems to us that the argument from the conservation of energy tends more to establish the idea of immortality taught in Hinduism than that taught by Christianity. It is the immortality of the dewdrop. "As a drop it is born, and as a drop it dies: but as aqueous vapour it persists." The above is Dr. Lodge's fig-

[1] "The Resurrection of Jesus," p. 272.

ure, and such is immortality without personality, which is Hinduism. Positivism and some of the new sciences preach as doleful an immortality as the Hindu doctrine, and not altogether dissimilar to it: namely, "an impersonal immortality in the consequence of our lives and actions, prolonged through the generations which come after us."[1] That sort of immortality does not appeal to any one, since those who are to inherit it do not at any time in the process exist to desire it, and no one can ever enjoy the ultimate good, which can only be the possession of the last man in the procession, and he will miss it, because the world will end before the process is complete.

The Old Testament Scriptures more than hint at the after life, but even here the evidence was not strong enough to unite their expositors in an affirmative faith. Pharisees and Sadducees took the pro and con views respectively, while both considered the Gentiles but dogs with a dog's destiny.

There are monitions of immortality in all the great religions, but not a clear, confident and hopeful assertion of it in one of them. Brahmanism, the oldest of the ethnic faiths, consigned the soul to repeated re-births, passage through innumerable forms of life, in journeys long and short, personality to be lost at last in the infinite, as the raindrop is finally lost in the ocean. The hope of individual, personal immortality is not cherished

[1] Goldwin Smith, "Guesses at the Riddle of Existence," p. 116,

and nurtured in Brahmanism.[1] Buddhism, the most extensive religion in the world, presents immortality "in so obscure a form that many of the best scholars declare that the highest aim and last result of all progress in Buddhism is annihilation."[2] Gautama, the Buddha, the founder of Buddhism, opposed the belief in a personal soul capable of a separate and conscious individual existence, which was a part of the thought of his time and country. With him salvation was a thing to be enjoyed in this life only.[3] Buddhism in China has so far reformed and adapted itself to demands of Chinese craving for immortality as to adopt a doctrine of future life.[4] But as the remark by Mr. Wu Ting Fang quoted above indicates the Chinese still crave more than Buddhism offers on this subject.

To sum up: Confucianism is not properly speaking a religion at all, and knows nothing about the future: Brahmanism is chiefly a philosophy and teaches that the soul is at last lost in infinity; pure Buddhism denies the existence of the soul altogether.

How great the contrast between all this and the words of Jesus! With Him this doctrine of the soul and its destiny is as clear as day, as luminous as light. There is no hesitation to speak, and no

[1] See "Great Religions of the World," article Brahmanism, by A. C. Lyal.

[2] Clark's "Ten Great Religions," pp. 490–491.

[3] "Great Religions of the World," article Buddhism, by T. W. Rhys Davids.

[4] "Uplift of China," by Arthur H. Smith, p. 106.

obscurity in His words. He knows the soul as He knows the body, and is as much at home in the celestial world, the soul's proper sphere, as in this present material house. There is nothing in all the literature of religion comparable to such words as these, taken almost at random from His discourses: "He that believeth on Me, though he die, yet shall he live; and whosoever liveth and believeth on Me shall never die" (John xi. 25–26). "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth may in Him have eternal life" (John iii. 14–15). "Because I live, ye shall live also" (John xiv. 19). In such assurances you have the first clear hopeful and satisfactory word ever spoken to man, conscious of capacity, and feverish with longing for immortal life. No wonder salvation is called "water of life"; it is such a glorious refreshing for those who famish with thirst for life, —endless, personal, blissful life. In the light of Jesus' teaching, our natures do not lie, as Pliny declared. The Great Teacher answers the great prophecies of the soul and satisfies its deep longing.

But totally eclipsing, as He does, by His words, all that was ever said before Him on the subject of man's deathless life and endless career, Jesus' revelation of immortality is not finished with doctrine; indeed, it is scarcely begun. It was not in words, as unapproachably full and glorious as His words were, that He brought life and immortality to light. On the subject of immortality, as upon

every other which He spake, Jesus Christ was the matchless teacher, but even more than in doctrine did Jesus outdistance all others in doing. It was so concerning this great theme. Indeed, in illuminating it, He advanced upon His own teaching and illustrated it. He gave us an example of the resurrection life. He demonstrated immortality. In His teaching He did not argue the question; He declared the fact. He made no conjectures based upon correspondences in nature, the capacity and the longings of the soul. He dealt in pure dogma, and followed this by absolute demonstration. The incomparable light which Jesus shed on the question of future life was His resurrection. If the words of others on the subject of immortality are to His words as a candle compared with the moon as a world illuminator, this deed of Jesus is like the sun outshining both. His resurrection was a revelation full and final. As Dr. Geikie says, immortality was an open question until Jesus rose from the dead. In that act, He showed us what He had told us. His safe journey through the shadow of death and reappearance banished doubt, made philosophical speculation obsolete, and argument impertinent. We do not now believe that life survives and persists beyond mortal death and the grave; we know that it does. We have had an exhibition of it. "If Christ be preached that He hath been raised from the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead?" (1 Cor. xv. 12). The resurrection put an

end to rational controversy. There is no longer a negative to maintain.

Whoever believes in the resurrection of Jesus is far in advance of the ancient philosophers, and does not need the help of spiritualism, the Society of Psychical Research, nor the corroboration of modern science to confirm his faith in future life. Jesus brought life and immortality to light—brought them into clear day and showed them unto us. We know there is indestructible life because we have seen it. Jesus' "grave was the birthplace of the indestructible belief that death is vanquished, and that there is a life eternal."[1]

If any raise the question as to the reality of the resurrection of Jesus and call for the evidence, this may be offered, and a discussion of it may be admitted; but let it be clearly understood that he who denies that resurrection as a historical fact is not a Christian. "The resurrection," says Tertullian, "is the Christian's hope; by it we are believers." Paul tells the Corinthians, "I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel which also ye received, wherein also ye stand; by which also ye are saved: . . . that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; and that He was buried; and that He hath been raised on the third day, according to the Scriptures" (1 Cor. xv. 1–4). Christians, then, are those who have believed in, and have been saved by the literal death, and the equally literal resurrection of Jesus. "If Christ hath not been raised, your

[1] "What is Christianity?" by Harnack, p. 175.

faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins" (1 Cor. xv. 17). Dr. W. Robertson Nicoll says it is legitimate to ask the critic, "Do you believe the incarnation and resurrection of Christ? If his reply is in the affirmative his process and results are to be examined earnestly and calmly. If he replies in the negative, he has missed the way, and has put himself outside the Church of Christ."[1] With slight modification these words might stand for an exposition of the above passage from Corinthians. There is nothing like this resurrection outside of Christianity, and no one is inside Christianity who denies it. Dr. William Hayes Ward may be quoted as the representative of a certain class of religious writers of the present day. He says, "A belief in the future life, and so in Christ's resurrection, is not absolutely essential to Christian character, which is the really essential thing in Christianity."[2]

This is thoroughly anti-Pauline. The best that can be said of this language is that it is consistent with what follows, namely, "It was in a flash of excessive and mistaken rhetorical fervour that Paul exclaimed, 'What advantageth it me if the dead rise not?'" etc. There is much else in this fifteenth chapter of Corinthians which must be attributed to "excessive and mistaken oratorical fervour" to support Dr. Ward and the class for whom he speaks, for Paul here maintains that the gospel is in its very heart the death and resurrection of

[1] "The Church's One Foundation," p. 4.

[2] *The Independent*, January, 1902.

Christ, and that it is this that saves, and without it men are in their sins. Now men in their sins can scarcely illustrate Christian character, "which is the really essential thing in Christianity." The mild words of Dean Church are recalled. He says, "A Christianity which tells us to think of Christ doing good, but to forget and put out of sight Christ risen from the dead, is not true to life." It is not even true Christianity at all, and is not true to anything. Scripture, apostolic teaching, historic faith, and the vital content in an efficient Christian evangelism are all contradicted, distorted and impoverished by such a view. The case is well stated by Dr. George Dana Boardman: "The resurrection of Jesus Christ is the pivotal fact of Christianity; it certifies beyond peradventure His religion; it is the absolutely unique fact of Christianity, the demonstration to the believer of its absolute certainty."[1] The death and resurrection of Christ constitute the culminating efficacious service of Christ in His redemptive work. Marking as they do the territory of two worlds, they denote the completeness of that redemption. The one event transpired on this side the silent grave and within the field of our sin and suffering, and compassed the needs and experiences of this life in the divine compassion; the other was enacted within the confines of the life beyond the grave and gives radiance to the immortal hope. The two are inseparable and bind life into one unbroken whole. In the experience and hope of these,

[1] "Our Risen King's Forty Days."

George McDonald could say: "I came from God, I am going back to God, and there will not be any gap in the middle of my life."

Thousands have gone over the evidence of Christ's resurrection, and found it sufficient to risk their eternal hope upon. The facts warrant these judicial words of Dr. Westcott: "It is not too much to say that there is no single historic incident better or more variously supported than the resurrection of Jesus Christ."[1] To the same effect is the decision of Dr. Arnold: "Thousands and tens of thousands have gone through the evidence which attests the resurrection of Christ, piece by piece, as carefully as a judge ever summed up an important case. I have done it myself many times, and I know of no fact in the history of mankind which is proved by better fitted evidence of any kind."

The way this fact got itself established in history is of itself a most convincing process. Of all men who ever admitted it, the first converts were, perhaps, the most tardy and timid believers. Those who loved Him most in life were the most stubborn skeptics concerning His resurrection. It was to His disciples as "idle tales," and such was their unwillingness to believe that He who loved them most "upbraided them with their unbelief," and called them "fools and slow of heart to believe." Belief in the fact was the last resort of the disciples. Forced to it by indubitable evidence, they gave it unyielding defense even at the greatest per-

[1] "The Gospel of the Resurrection," p. 136.

sonal risk, and found in it the chief support of a confident hope amidst the suffering which their witness to it entailed. They set it before others with personal testimony and with such indisputable evidence, and the citation of such numerous and available eye-witnesses as was scarcely ever produced in any court of evidence. They gave their own testimony and named other witnesses who could be produced for examination if any doubted.

Before ascending to heaven, Jesus instructed His disciples to begin their testimony as His witnesses at Jerusalem, where His death and resurrection were accomplished, where the facts were known, and where other eye-witnesses were available. It was precisely under these conditions where fraud or deception would, as will never be possible again, most certainly have been detected that Christianity achieved its most signal success, and that success distinctly upon the merit of the claim for the death and resurrection of Jesus which constituted specifically the testimony of the disciples in their early Jerusalem ministry. There was abundant testimony for His resurrection, and no successful contradiction of it. Christianity won its early converts and was established in history by eye-witnesses to His death. Four times in that marvellous resurrection chapter of First Corinthians, Paul used the word "seen": "*seen* of Cephas, then of the twelve"; "*seen* of about five hundred brethren at once, of whom the greater part remain unto the present"; "*seen* of James, then of all the

apostles"; "He was *seen* of me." No wonder thousands believed!

But this did not exhaust the evidence. The resurrection produced and still produces evidence in favour of its reality. "The power of His resurrection" (Phil. iii. 10), and "the power of an endless life" (Heb. vii. 16) have ever since been manifest. Pentecost, Paul's conversion, the origin and existence of the Church, and the Christian experience are themselves resultant facts and strong evidence for the resurrection of Jesus.[1] Of the faith of the disciples in the resurrection of Jesus, Baur says: "It is in this faith only that Christianity found a ground solid enough to erect upon it the superstructure of its whole historical development." Upon this foundation it has stood through the centuries of furious assault, and will stand all the firmer with the succeeding years in which the moral effects of this doctrine add to its defenses.

Nor does this gauge the power and brilliance of that light into which Jesus brought life and immortality by His resurrection and which is dispersed through his gospel. His teachings did not stop with the affirmations of endless existence simply, and the demonstration of His teaching afforded by His resurrection is a fitting counterpart and climax to that teaching. That is to say, Christian immortality is more than the continuance of life beyond death; it is the resurrection of the body that consti-

[1] See Orr's "Resurrection of Jesus," pp. 205–210.

tutes the crowning revelation of gospel immortality. It is this doctrine, resting on the solid historic fact of Jesus' resurrection that constitutes the incomparable, the unapproachable uniqueness of the Christian faith concerning the future. It is no mere survival of the soul that exhausts and transcendently distinguishes the Christian doctrine of immortality, but the resurrection of the body, and the endless reunited life of soul and body. That is wherein no philosophy and no religion parallels or approaches Christianity in this matter. The hope of immortality flickers in all men's hearts at times. Literature is not, as we have seen, without the thought of great men upon it. But here it is in fact and more. The Christian doctrine is not that of belief in a discarnate immortality. It is a new and larger unique fact. Jesus' resurrection is the solitary example of bodily resurrection to endless life within the pale of authentic history, and the only *fact* offered anywhere as the ground and guarantee of our hope and the pattern of our immortal life. It is this fact of the resurrection given as an example and a sample of immortality and not a confirmation of the world's hope or the philosopher's hypothesis of conscious spiritual existence beyond the grave that transcendently distinguishes and exalts Christianity. The grave terminated and punctuated with a period of black despair the messages of all the prophets of immortality who lived before Christ's day, but since then the story runs:

"Now hath Christ been raised from the dead.

. . . . . .

In Christ shall all be made alive."

(1 *Cor. xv.* 20, 22.)

"There is no instance in history, apart from Christianity, of a religion established on belief in the resurrection of its founder." [1] The resurrection of His body was a supreme test of His claims and proof of His authority as a teacher of religion; it remains a vital and essential element to the Christian religion. The crucifixion and the resurrection constitute such a part of the gospel as to be called the gospel by Paul. Outside of Christianity the world has nothing on the subject of immortality better than the contradictions of philosophy, the futile efforts of the human mind to solve the enchanting riddle.

The resurrection of His body is the prophecy of bodily resurrection. "But now hath Christ been raised from the dead, the first-fruits of them that are asleep" (1 Cor. xv. 20). He has not only secured for us "eternal redemption" by His death (Heb. ix. 12), but the "redemption of our body" (Rom. viii. 23), by His resurrection. Because He lives we shall live also. We shall have a body like "the body of His glory" (Phil. iii. 21). The whole heathen religious literature cannot offer a hope like that nor even produce a counterfeit of this transcendent doctrine. While we do not agree with

[2] "The Resurrection of Jesus," James Orr, p. 146.

him as to the origin or the place of immortality in the Christian system, we may quote as true the words of Dr. W. N. Clarke. "The present Christian people," he says, "hold to immortality as their human birthright and their Christian inheritance, and live in the light of immortal hope."[1] Henri Frederick Amiel, brilliant genius and creature of a thousand warring emotions, translated the Christian experience into the following beautiful language: "And so," he says, "for those who have believed, the tomb becomes heaven, and on the funeral pyres of life, they sang the Hosannas of immortality."[2] Let the beautiful words of Victor Hugo close this chapter. They show the universal instinct, what he calls "thirst for the infinite," but they have borrowed their triumphant hopefulness from the Christian and not the heathen doctrine of immortality. It is Christ who turns the "blind alley" of death into a "thoroughfare" that leads not to the "twilight" but to the "dawn."

"I feel in myself the future life. I am like the forest which has been more than once cut down. The new shoots are stronger and livelier than ever. I am rising, I know, towards the sky. The sunshine is on my head. The earth gives me its generous sap, but heaven lights me with the reflection of unknown worlds. . . . You say the soul is nothing but the resultant of bodily powers! Why then is my soul more luminous when my body be-

[1] "What Shall We Think of Christianity?" p. 81.

[2] Amiel's "Journal," p. 168.

gins to fail? Winter is on my head and eternal spring is in my heart. Then I breathe at this hour the fragrance of the lilacs, the violets, and the roses as at twenty years. The nearer I approach to the end, the plainer I hear around me the symphonies of the world which invites me. It is marvellous, yet simple. It is a fairy tale, and it is history. For half a century I have written my thoughts in prose, verse, history, philosophy, drama, romance, tradition, satire, ode, song—I have tried all. But I feel that I have not said a thousandth part of what is in me. When I go down to the grave, I can say like so many others, I have finished my day's work, but I cannot say that I have finished my life's. My day's work will begin again in the morning. The tomb is not a blind alley; it is a thoroughfare. It closes in the twilight to open in the dawn.

"I improve every hour because I love this world as my Fatherland. My work is only a beginning. My monument is hardly above its foundation. I would be glad to see it mounting forever. The thirst for the infinite proves infinity."

VII

A RATIONAL FUTURITY—THE CHRISTIAN DOCTRINE OF HEAVEN AND HELL

"What is rational is real; and what is real is rational."—*Hegel.*

THE vast contrast between the light which Christianity and other religions respectively shed upon the future does not fully appear even with the resurrection of the body established as a sure hope by the resurrection of Jesus, as radically as that fact differentiates them. In the sequence to that fact, the future state of man, the Christian doctrine of immortality is given increasing reality, its superior excellences exhibited, and Christianity is distinguished fundamentally from all that claims the devotion and would sustain the hope of the world.

The futurity found outside the Christian Scriptures is a spiritual chaos; that taught in the Scriptures is a cosmos, an organized spiritual society. Well defined, harmonious and inviolable laws prevail in man's future as in his present world—the *same* moral rule exists there that exists here. The universal laws of right and wrong hold steadily in the soul's whole career, in both worlds and to remotest eternity. Good will always be good, and bad always bad, right always right and wrong always wrong; and respect for the eternal distinction will

be recognized yonder as here. Death destroys nothing of actual moral verity. The real distinctions will remain.

The reasonable moral distinctions are carried over into the future by Christianity and by no other religion. A rational heaven and a rational hell are fundamental facts of the Christian's unique creed. According to the teaching of the ethnic faiths, the soul in its moral progress either loses itself or looses itself; either progresses in a spurious ethical development to the vanishing point, or it escapes the restraints of moral law by reaching a sensual paradise where license is given man's evil passions. Such immortality might be pronounced *immorality*. The following comprehensive contrast is by one who has studied deep and long the ethnic faiths and as a faithful missionary for many years, has acquired a personal acquaintance with the people who hold some of these beliefs: "Christianity stands in the strongest contrast with all the religions in the world in this doctrine of heaven. The eternal, sinless, sorrowless home of the redeemed, where they shall be absolutely faultless, perfectly happy and clothed in heaven's unfading glory, as set forth in the Christian Scriptures, is a conception utterly impossible to the unaided human mind. Contrast with it the Elysium of the ancient Greeks; the Valhalla or warrior's paradise of the Scandinavians where heroes hold high carnival; the Nirvana of Buddhism which they call the 'eternal calm' but which might better be called the eternal blank; the Moham-

medan paradise of sensuous pleasures, where the faithful shall recline on luxurious couches, attended by beautiful dark-eyed nymphs and regale themselves with most delicious viands; the Hindu loss of personality and reabsorption into Deity. Buddhism asks, 'What shall I do to inherit *eternal extinction?*' Christianity asks, 'What shall I do to inherit eternal life?'

"The Christian heaven consists in a state of holiness, bliss and glory which eye has not seen nor ear heard and which has never entered into the heart of man; but which God has revealed by His Spirit. But the heavens of the ethnic religions consist in just the very things that eye has seen and ear has heard, and that have entered into the heart of man, happy hunting grounds, luxurious feasting, gratification of sensual pleasures, sleep. In the Revelation the curtain which hides the future is drawn aside, and we catch a few rapturous glimpses of the kingdom which God has prepared for those who love Him. And what do we behold? Absolute purity; complete conformity to God's holy will; joy unspeakable; never fading glory; eternal praise; robes of spotless whiteness, emblematic of righteousness; shining crowns and triumphal palms, telling of victory over sin; loved ones reunited; tears all wiped away; sin and its consequences, sorrow, pain and death forever banished; full redemption celebrated in grateful songs forevermore. The transporting prospect purifies and elevates the soul, nerves it for the trials and conflicts of this earthly

state, and spans the grave with the rainbow of immortal hope. Its doctrine of heaven alone is sufficient to stamp Christianity as divine, for it could not have originated with man. It is far above, and essentially different from human conceptions."[1]

But the Christian's heaven is not a creation of the imagination. It is no phantasy formed by man in his dreams of immortality, nor bestowed arbitrarily by omnific Deity. Heaven and hell are the natural and rational corollaries of the present moral order of the universe. The Christian doctrine of moral law here necessitates just and righteous recompense yonder. Accepting moral law as the rule of the race, we cannot escape from moral consequence—future reward and future punishment. Law and judgment exist together and only together.

Modern science has established no facts so securely nor emphasized any so strongly as these, that law is universal in its operation, that there is security in observing law, and that its penalties are sure. Whether it be the case of a man or a planet, liberty is conditioned on conformity to law. Disaster to one's self and danger to others are certain to follow lawbreaking. The Christian doctrine of the future conforms to this rational view of the universe. Heaven and hell are not won by chance, nor bestowed by fickle fortune, nor indiscriminate and sentimental condonation of man's guilt. A man may calculate his chances of heaven and hell

[1] W. G. Boggs.

by the unerring law of cause and effect, by just and indiscriminate statutes, even as he forecasts the results of a given application of force in a department of physics, or calculates the illuminating power of an electric current, the expulsive power of a chest of steam, the explosive power of a quantity of dynamite. He may anticipate his doom or his acquittal as confidently as he can foretell the decision of an upright judge with a given case of law and evidence of its observance or violation before him. The law of cause and effect, of right and wrong, operate in the one case as in the other. "Whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap; for he that soweth unto his own flesh shall of the flesh reap corruption, but he that soweth unto the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap eternal life" (Gal. vi. 7–8). Men do not reach heaven by a blind favouritism nor hell by a cruel fatalism, as in Mohammedanism. In that future where these mark the terminals of all the roads men take thither, eternal law and justice reign. We "must all be made manifest before the judgment seat of Christ; that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he hath done, whether it be good or bad" (2 Cor. v. 10).

The only plausible objection yet raised to future punishment is against the justice of it. This objection is founded on ignorance of Revelation at the only point where reasonable objection could rest, namely: punishment is administered in exact proportion to one's guilt, "according to that he

hath done." The extent of the transgression, the nature of it, the knowledge and light possessed, one's circumstances and opportunities, all shall enter into that question of guilt and judgment. Infinite Wisdom and Justice will weigh them all and fix an absolutely righteous and impartial penalty. "And that servant, who knew his lord's will, and made not ready, nor did according to his will, shall be beaten with many stripes; but he that knew not, and did things worthy of stripes, shall be beaten with few stripes" (Luke xii. 47–48). Innocence and guilt often lie down together in the same prison-cell here, but not so in the future. Innocence shall be vindicated before the judgment seat of Christ and each of the lost and unrepentant guilty shall be given sentence in degree according to individual deserts. There is no other rational and just doctrine of the future of the impenitent. A God of justice and goodness is inconceivable apart from future retribution and reward.

There will be no divisions on fictitious lines. There is to be no change of the moral order. No abandonment by the all-wise Author of law of His own statutes and no resort to new expedients. There come no surprises and no emergencies in God's moral government. Not even the cross of Christ was an expedient, as Cowper supposed:

> "Point to the cure, describe a Saviour's cross
> As God's expedient to retrieve His loss."

John had a better understanding of the nature and

government of God and viewing the divine plans as equivalent to performance, declared that Jesus was "slain from the foundation of the world" (Rev. xiii. 8). Calvary was a part of the original program of the universe. It was not a divine improvisation to avert a universal catastrophe precipitated by man's breach of law, but a foreordination to prevent one. Provision here was the complement of prevision. The provision of a remedy for sin is cotemporaneous with the purpose to create man a free moral agent. The Atonement will at last be found to be as fundamental in its character and as integral a part of the moral order as the hygienics of sunlight are of the physical world. The medicines which heal the sick were stored in the plants of the field and roots of the forest before the patient was born but for his malady, and to operate in conformity to recognized physical laws. Without a true doctrine of atonement, all the heathen religions hold unreal views of sin. Indeed, in Christian lands, a false doctrine of sin invariably accompanies a false doctrine of the Atonement. The true view of sin and forgiveness like the science of diagnosis and treatment of disease advance together. The existence of the false view of either marks an ignorance of the law to which both conform. Paul speaks of "the law of faith," and we will yet learn that faith is in as harmonious conformity to the moral order as sanitation and medication are to physical law.

The Christian doctrine of redemption and futurity

rest upon this substantial rational basis. Punishment and reward are necessary inferences drawn from the permanence and universal prevalence of moral law. If it be found that under moral law goodness has its reward and badness its penalties here, there is no rational escape from the conclusion that this order prevails everywhere and will prevail forever. Our natures persuade us that God is eternally just and that the future will afford no escape from His justice. Goldwin Smith presented a pitiful spectacle of a man at the end of a long life with an interrogation point before him. But he seems to have treated his nature honestly though he mocked at Christianity and rejected its comfort. "Now," he says, "there does seem to be a voice in every man which if he will listen to it, tells him that his account is not closed at death. The good man, however unfortunate he may have been, and even though he may not have found integrity profitable, feels at the end of life a satisfaction in his past and an assurance that in the sum of things he will find that he has chosen right. The most obdurately wicked man, however his wickedness may have prospered, will probably wish when he comes to die that he had lived the life of the righteous."[1]

The doctrine of future punishment is not as some superficial sentimentalists teach, a remnant of ignorant and barbaric times. It conforms to rational, historical evolution, growing with the

[1] "Guesses at the Riddle of Existence," pp. 126–127.

growth of religious literature and knowledge. The most ancient religious faiths have least of this doctrine in them. It grows steadily more luminous from its first glimmer in Hebrew literature to the close of the Christian Scriptures. The most advanced period of Biblical literature is that which is most characterized by this revelation of future punishment. Not the Pentateuch but the Revelation is lurid with the fierce fires of God's wrath. Not some ancient heathen, nor Moses, Plato, nor Aristotle, Brahma, nor Buddha, but Christ and those taught by Him were the great expounders of this doctrine. It grows with the larger and more fundamental truths of revelation; with the higher ethics, with the hope of immortality, redemption and the doctrines of grace. It will continue more and more to claim a larger attention with the growth of true religion and true and reverent scientific knowledge. In the light of moral law, as now accepted, the denial of future punishment for those who persistently rebel against that law must be considered irrational.

The Christian doctrine of reward and punishment is in striking harmony with our present knowledge and equally bold and striking contrast with the vague and fortuitous futurity of all the ethnic faiths. Some of these are such medleys of conflicting philosophies that no consistent theory of the future can be adduced from them, as the following language by such authorities as F. W. Rhys Davids and Dr. A. B. Bruce indicates. The first

says that the "Buddhistic doctrine of salvation was that it could only be enjoyed in this life and there was no salvation at all beyond the grave."[1] Dr. Bruce is equally explicit in declaring that the Buddhistic theory of rewards and punishments is: "Men who have lived good lives in this world may go at death to a place of damnation and men who have lived here bad lives may pass into the heaven of the gods. The damnation in the one case is the late fruitage of some evil done in long bygone ages and the bliss in the other case tardy recompense of good deeds done in a previous state of existence."[2] "The Buddhist's heaven, annihilation, is one form in which men in Christian lands hold the doctrine of hell. This is a sign of essential difference between the two beliefs."[3] To say nothing of how these theories contradict themselves, they are all irrational. Brahmanism and Buddhism cannot commend themselves to intelligence possessed of modern knowledge. As a philosophy they are incoherent and as a religion, they lack the fundamentals of religion, including a rational moral order for the universe. It was a heathen poet who sang of the Lethe in which the bather forgot all misery and sorrow and a Christian Dante who sang of the river Eunoe, bathing in which, one remembered all the pleasant things of his past life. The difference between these conceptions is the

[1] "Great Religions of the World," p. 26.
[2] "The Moral Order of the World," pp. 21-22.
[3] "Why is Christianity True?" E. Y. Mullens, p. 94.

difference between the heaven of Brahmanism and that of Christianity. One represents a lapse of function and of rational order, the other represents their perfection.

Between the individual's death and the final "Liberation" of Brahmanism there may be countless ages of vicissitudes before the personality is lost in its goal of impersonal existence. One is reminded of the lines of Nehemiah Dodge addressed to a skeleton:

> "Of what avail is all the strife,
> The stress and toil of human life;
> If this wan spectre is the goal,
> The final answer to the soul."

Goethe says: "Those who respect no other life are for this life already dead." The Mohammedan heaven is neither rational, moral nor restricted to those who scrupulously pursue morality. A sensual heaven is provided for sensual men. "In a word, he (Mohammed's god) burns one individual through all eternity amid red-hot chains and seas of molten fire and seats another in a plenary enjoyment of an everlasting brothel between forty celestial concubines just equally for his own good pleasure and because he wills it."[1] Moral law which is the order of God's universe, is trifled with and that order is turned topsyturvy in the world where reasonably we should expect to find its peaceful

[1] Palgrove, quoted by J. F. Clark.

and harmonious reign. "Wrath is not free from passion and holiness comes short of its right."[1]

It is patent that the Christian view of the future also rationally subserves the ends of morality in the present world. The impossibility of heaven without a pure heart and the certainty of hell if one is unrighteous, constitute the strongest restraint upon the unlawful passions of men in every age and country, the enlightened as well as the ignorant. A fine test of any religious doctrine is the man it makes. Mohammedans can abrogate the decalogue in their moral behaviour, because Mohammed first abrogated moral law in the heaven and hell which his imagination created. The moral and social contrast between every non-Christian land on the globe and any Christian land is a sign of the contrast between the non-Christian and the Christian doctrine of the future. The distinction is radical and fundamental in religion and to all that religion proposes to accomplish for the race.

Heaven provides compensation for the injustices, inequalities and the vicarious sacrifices of the good whose faith and life are purest in this life. To some of these, God now allows most of earthly ill. Reason tells us that for such the future holds:

> "The lucid interspace of world and world
> Where never creeps a cloud or moves a wind,
> Nor ever falls the least white star of snow,

[1] "Moslem Doctrine of God," Swemer, p. 113.

Nor ever lowest roll of thunder moans,
Nor sound of human sorrow mounts to mar
Their sacred everlasting calm."
(*Tennyson's "Lucretius."*)

In no other view of human life is there end to human sin, or healing for human sorrow. Balzac speaks from wide observation when he refers to this doctrine as "That form of faith which is most conducive to social order, namely: future recompense—the only belief which can make mankind accept their misery."[1] "If it is a poor philosophy which calls in the rewards and penalties of another life to redress the wrongs caused by the unequal distribution of pleasure and pain in this, yet no argument which attempts to justify the ways of God to men can afford to forget the full measure and duration of God's relations to man. Time and eternity are one; he who is and who is to be are one and the same person; and his life, its meaning, purpose, discipline, can never be understood if he be regarded as a mere mortal being, with no existence save what begins with birth and ends at death. The scale on which an immortal being is planned is not commensurate with any measure of mortality; and what to a mortal might well seem unmitigated evil may appear to the immortal only a discipline the better qualifying him for his immortality."[2]

[1] "Country Doctor," p. 25.

[2] Fairbairn's "Philosophy of the Christian Religion," pp. 149–150.

The Christian view of the future is incomparable as an incentive to purity of life, to highest moral endeavour and a patient hopefulness amidst life's ills. "Every one that hath this hope set on him, purifieth himself" (1 John iii. 3). It has in it greater motor power for worthy living than can be found in all other religious thought combined. All classes, the man on the plane nearest the animal and the man of highest ethical development, are responsive to these motives. Self-preservation, self-improvement, noble ambition, highest social instinct, ethical and even artistic idealism—all are appealed to. It is scarcely possible to conceive of stronger incentives than are here furnished or an ideal so lofty that the Christian doctrine of heaven does not furnish ground for its inspiration, room for its entertainment and promise of its realization. The richest hope of heaven is the character to be attained there. The blessings provided and enjoyed are secondary to the perfection of the life itself and are suited to such a life only. Religion, the Christian religion, begets in its converts a supreme impatience with personal moral imperfection and an intense passion for righteousness which grow with advancing development of the spiritual life. The hope of a perfect character becomes the most coveted reward of heaven. It is just this that the Christian's heaven shall provide. The spiritual climate and the company of heaven are perfectly congenial for one with such desires and shall hasten his maturity. The crown of heaven is to

be a crown of character and not a material coronet. It is called a "crown of life," a "crown of righteousness," a "crown of glory." Life and righteousness shall then come to the glory of perfection, crowning all growth. The royal diadem shall be likeness to Him whose glorious image God predestinated us to be conformed to. "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled" (Matt. v. 6). The intensest, the one impatient desire of the Christian is moral perfection, and heaven fulfills that desire. "As for me, I shall behold Thy face in righteousness; I shall be satisfied when I awake in Thy likeness" (Psa. xvii. 15). "Henceforth there is laid up for me the crown of righteousness which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day" (2 Tim. iv. 8). The Christian man may dream his fondest dreams, indulge his largest hopes, nurse his loftiest ambitions, think his highest thoughts of goodness, beauty, love, holiness and happiness, and his most ravishing ideal will tame and dull before the bright reality which awaits him.

"All we have willed or hoped or dreamed of good shall exist:
Not its semblance, but itself: no beauty nor good nor power
Whose voice has gone forth, but each survives for the melodist
When eternity affirms the conception of an hour."

(*Robert Browning.*)

VIII

CONCLUSIONS

THERE are some inferences from all this, and they ought to be so framed as to be the last things forgotten of all that is said in these pages, for they are the most practical. If the seven great doctrinal facts here set down are the structural elements of Christianity, and if, as we claim, they are peculiar to the Christian religion, then certainly there must follow some most momentous and important duties—duties so important indeed, that they cannot be overestimated. Whether we shall adequately state these or not, we shall at least hope so to call attention to them that what has been written shall not be wholly without pure missionary results. What then is the logic of these facts?

First, the unique character of the Christian religion constituted by its essential and saving elements establishes a foundation for the missionary enterprise. We have heard it said that the command of Jesus is the fundamental reason for missions. That indeed ought to be reason enough for one who acknowledges His lordship. But Jesus Himself had a reason for giving the command. What was His reason? It was that the gospel of salvation is absolutely unique and peculiarly a Christian posses-

sion, not one of its essential doctrines being contained in any other religion or religious philosophy. We alone have a Revelation, a Gospel, a Saviour; we alone are God's stewards for all men of a sure message of life. We are debtors to all, Greek, barbarian, bond and free because we hold in trust for them God's bounty of saving truth. The Christian people are the "Stewards of the mysteries of God" (1 Cor. iv. 1). "Stewards of the manifold grace of God" (1 Pet. iv. 10). Sinners saved by the grace of God that we are, we must needs remember that only by that grace which saved us and of which we are God's stewards can any man be saved.

This constitutes a substantial missionary appeal. It must be set to the front. Many of the old appeals are losing their power. Sectarianism and mere denominationalism are not now strong enough to hold the Christian conscience. Sentimental and anecdotal pathos is losing its power over most audiences and in quarters where it still brings forth tears it fails to bring forth dollars. If the missionary enterprise is to command the quality of men and the quantity of money it needs the appeal must henceforth rest upon something more profoundly real, and therefore more reasonable, than shallow sentiment and cheap romance. That need is found in the unique character of Christianity and the peculiar religious value of its distinctive doctrines. In these alone is to be found justification for an adequate expenditure of life, money and

energy to carry the enterprise to successful consummation. If we only have the Word of life, without which the world must die, indeed is dead, then whether by life or death, that word must be carried to every man. Its proclamation is the supreme business of ever redeemed life. To give such a gospel to the nations is worth the brightest and best, and their highest and best. All service and sacrifice and all gifts and self-denial for this cause are inconsequential and incommensurable considerations compared with the simple, awful and inevitable fact consequent upon failure and delay of the enterprise. That which will send the heralds of the cross to other shores with tongues of fire, is a settled conviction not that we have *a* religion, nor even that we have the *best* religion, but that we have the *only* religion.

We are not to forget that Brahmanism, Buddhism, Confucianism, Judaism and the Egyptian religion, the Grecian and Latin philosophies all existed in Jesus' day, but to all alike He commanded His disciples to go with the gospel and the unminced message, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned" (Mark xvi. 16). No religion and no philosophy can stand any one instead of this gospel, preëmpt any part of the field or offer a reasonable excuse for our neglect and indifference. This universal mission of Christianity and the corresponding imperative to displace every other religion with these doctrines is a conclusion which

all must have reached who have admitted that these doctrines constitute a unique message. This point need not therefore be further elaborated.

There are other conclusions equally pertinent but which may not be so apparent to some until they are pointed out. We may, therefore, give the remainder of our space to a presentation of these.

Second, then, the uniqueness of the Christian message establishes for it a peculiar claim upon the Christian pulpit. It may well be doubted whether there is a more important matter for the minister of these times to settle than what shall be the themes and the substance of his pulpit discourses. The minister was perhaps never so multiscient, never knew so many things *about* the Bible, *about* the gospel, *about* religion; was never so well taught in so many things about *how* to tell what he knows, and yet if the pulpit announcements in many metropolitan dailies really mean what they say, many, very many preachers of the highest training do not know what to preach. We have collected pulpit announcements made in the daily papers of several cities. Here are a few samples: One popular preacher announces that he will preach on "Society's Joss House," and "The Automatic Calf"; another promises all who attend the "First Church" on successive Sundays dissertations on "Skidoo-23," the "Religious Donkey," "Casey at the Bat," "Am I a Monkey or a Man?" Another "First Church" flock received instruction upon "A Nagging Spouse," "A Patriotic Old

Maid"; while another announces that, just before observing the Lord's Supper, he will preach on the symbolism of his city! One cultured and gifted pastor invited the young people to come and hear him preach on "Courting in a Street Car." Such pulpit announcements either do not mean what they say and are, therefore, a form of deception, or they declare plainly that the men who make them do not always preach the gospel from their pulpits. Whatever be the alternative the case is a sad one and gives occasion for serious thought. When a man receives a call to the ministry he is under commission to deliver a specific message. A preacher ought to have no misgivings as to the inner call and must certainly have none with regard to his message: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel." There is no mistaking what the preacher has a commission to proclaim. His call, when appreciated, in its simplicity and fullness, is a call of the whole man for his whole time to preach the whole gospel, and only the gospel, to every creature.

And yet the age is full of enticements. Morning after morning just as the preacher is ready to enter his study or his pulpit, the public mind is set aflame with some sensation of the hour. Why should he not adopt the course of least resistance and sail his craft by the popular winds with the hope that somehow he may be able to cast his net into the midst of a school of curious but unwary fishes? Is there not more sport in fishing where

there are fish than where there are none even if you catch nothing? They will follow the bait for a while if they do not bite the hook. And then the age takes notice of a preacher who preaches to a crowd. Pulpit committees want men who will draw. The preacher must get the ear of the public and how can he better do it than by talking about things in which the public is interested? Is it not easier to think with the people than think for them?

Now to the superficial observer, and the superficial only, does the plausibility of this appear. But if this really furnished an easy solution to the minister's problem and assured his success, is there not patent in such a course a lowering of ministerial function and such a confession of personal weakness as is certain to breed self-contempt? How can a genuine man, with a minister's training, take his cue from strippling newspaper reporters, and admit that they can with petty gossip get an audience which he cannot with the eternal, glorious gospel of his Lord? And how can he abandon the gospel for gossip and steal the reporter's audience and call it his congregation?

The case is just as bad as that and worse, for it marks the degeneracy of God's highest man and the prostitution of man's highest calling, betrays infidelity to the most sacred trust, and then, at the last, ends in failure. Great audiences have waited on the ministry of preachers who delivered their own messages upon great themes, owned their own souls and preserved their consciences and self-

respect meanwhile. "It is well for the preacher enveloped by our secular spirit to remember that burning subjects soon die into white ashes, and then when this artificial fire has perished audiences also grow cold and seek some other hearth, while congregations which are fed with the living bread grow more receptive every day, and will not lightly forsake the teacher who has satisfied the hunger of the soul."[1] The following from Dr. W. M. Clow, who is himself a fine illustration of this truth, states a timely fact for many preachers: "It explains the secret of those large, enthusiastic congregations, eager in missionary enterprise, generous in gift, breeding the men who serve in the benevolences and philanthropies of the world. They have been founded and fostered by the preaching of the Cross. There are other ways of gathering an audience. Eloquence, taste, a quick appreciation of what men wish to hear about, an artistry in the service, all have their just reward. But no great congregation, which is both permanent and strong, can be built up except by giving the primacy to the Atonement in Christ's blood."[2] There is scarcely an exception to the rule; the men who through the whole Christian era have steadily held the masses to their ministry and wrought mighty works for God among men have handled Bible themes. Here alone can the preacher find a perennially

[1] "God's Message to the Human Soul," John Watson, D. D., p. 204.

[2] "The Cross in Christian Experience," pp. 322–323.

fresh and infinitely varied repertoire of subjects for his age, and most of all for this age, jaded with cheap sensationalism.

But these great themes have a still greater claim upon the preacher. His business is not to create a sensation, much less to echo one, nor make a spectacle, nor to get a crowd, nor become a popular hero, but to save lost men. Success in the main business will indeed make a sensation and draw the multitudes, but these are inconsequential results compared with winning sinners. And sinners can be effectually and really won with nothing less than the gospel. The greatest preacher of the ages was the greatest soul winner, because he could say, "I make known unto you, brethren, the gospel, which I preached unto you, which also ye received, wherein also ye stand, by which also ye are saved" (1 Cor. xv. 1, 2). And again, "In Christ Jesus I begat you through the gospel" (1 Cor. iv. 15). While we cannot wholly agree with Dr. Charles Cuthbert Hall in his sweeping indictment of "the younger generation of preachers," his words may well be taken as a warning by all. "The effects," he says, "of this (the resistance of the theology of Paul) are already appearing in the impoverished religious values of the sermons produced by the younger generation of preachers; and the deplorable decline of spiritual life and knowledge in many churches. Results open to observation show that the movement to simplify the Christian essence by discarding the theology of St.

Paul easily carries the teaching of the Christian pulpit to a position where, for those who submit to that teaching, the characteristic experiences of the Christian life become practically impossible. The Christian sense of sin; Christian penitence at the foot of the Cross; Christian faith in an Atoning Saviour; Christian peace with God through the mediation of Jesus Christ—these and other experiences, which were the very life of apostles and of apostolic souls, fade from the view of the ministry, have no meaning for the younger generation. After twenty centuries of power they are minimized in the life of the Church."[1] The man who covets souls for his hire must preach on these themes. The minister who does not covet souls courts guilt. He cannot be innocent before God and indifferent to a lost humanity. Lucy Larcom voices the soul of the true minister.

> "There be sad women, guilty and poor,
> And those who walk in garments soiled;
> Their shame, their sorrow I endure,
> By their defeat my hope is foiled;
> The blot they bear is on my name
> Who sins, and I am not to blame?"

The minister has a remedy for sin and must hurry to those who are sick with this fatal disease. This age makes a peculiar demand upon the minister of the gospel. He should know his message, be spe-

[1] "The Universal Elements of the Christian Religion," pp. 140-141.

cific and sound it out clearly and distinctly. Many false prophets have arisen. Never were there so many opinions hawked in the name of religion as to-day. Our age and country reminds one of Paul's time and Greece. This keen-eyed preacher perceived that the Athenians had many religions and the multitude of isms drew him to the conclusion and from him the declaration that he would know nothing but Christ crucified among the Greeks. The one cure for all this surfeit of religion and half-religion and consequent religious disease of our times is vigorous and repeated doses of pure gospel tonic. The religious practitioner must dispense the pure essence of the gospel, the essentials of Christianity and of salvation to this sadly debilitated age to save it from the moral death to which it is being hastened by religious nostrum mongers. It often takes, if anything, more gospel and it more skillfully and heroically administered to save a man from his religion than from his sins. Jesus pronounced woe upon the Pharisees because they compassed sea and land to make one proselyte and when he was made, he was twofold more a child of hell than themselves. The higher the type of religion which a man has in corrupted and ineffectual form, the more difficult his conversion. Many so-called converts are sadly deceived perverts. The message for these must be one that has virtue in it. The words of Venet quoted by Christlieb have a pertinence for our age. "We must revert to the elementary, fundamental

and eternally unshaken points if we desire that a new generation shall again be fed with the bread of life."

The age presents a favourable setting for these great truths. When so many are heard crying in a babel of contradictory tongues and the people are bewildered by unintelligible religious jargon, then is a good time for a man with a true and well-defined message to send out a long, strong blast of his gospel trumpet, calling the people to hear. Well attested, distinctive truth has a great hour now, if only it can find friends to advocate it. These great doctrines of inspiration and redemption shine gloriously against the background which this age presents. The man who at such a time modifies his message to suit the age, falls into a trap, whether the modification be to suit the false religious sentiment of the times, or the demands of modern science. Indeed if one begins to modify his message, when will the process be done and what will be the final result? Suppose, for instance, the pulpit had, twenty years ago, trimmed down its Christian doctrines to the theory of evolution then rampant, what would be the condition of theology to-day? It would not be merely more trimming down that is needed. That indeed might be simple. But we would be faced with the difficult task of piecing out a theology which had been cut too short. Evolution to-day does not demand the modifications in the realm of theology which it demanded a quarter of a century ago. Itself has

been modified in recent years. The man who cut his doctrine down at the first call is short on doctrine now even in the eyes of evolutionists. And so the process continues. Nothing in the province of human thought and knowledge is so sure and unchangeable and so certain to be found in harmony with pure reason and pure science when their work is complete as are the verities of the Christian faith.

We put it down, therefore, as the second inference from these peculiar and essential elements of the Christian religion that they should find a larger place in the pulpit.

The third deduction follows naturally upon this, namely, the friends of evangelical Christianity must make sure of the permanence of these truths in their present strongholds if we are to have resources sufficient to carry the missionary enterprise on to successful and final issue. The saving truths of the gospel are distinctively recognized and fairly positioned by comparatively few Christian communities, among a small part of the race and in a very limited area. They stand in bolder relief and have greater freedom of action among the evangelical denominations of America than anywhere else in the world. Ritualism and ecclesiasticism so veil and impoverish them in many quarters that they lose much of their distinctiveness and regenerating power. They have from the very first had stronger emphasis and a better proportioned setting in the dominant religious life of America than in any

other land perhaps. This nation was founded on faith in certain great religious principles. Its institutions have grown up under their nurture, and it has received its distinctive marks from these beliefs. Evangelical religion has done more for American education, general intelligence, social purity and political democracy than all other forces besides which have operated to make the nation. If we suffer to wane the evangelical faith which has created our institutions, where shall we find that which is powerful enough to produce another order as superior to the present as this is to that past out of which evangelical faith made it? Evangelical religion has wrought here with a freer hand and demonstrated its power and value as nowhere else in all the world and in the whole course of time. The experiment is a vindication and a demonstration. It is also an argument and contains a lesson.

It is in America that evangelical religion has had its best chance and in America will as certainly be determined its destiny. The English-speaking race has been the beneficiary, and is now the guardian of this distinctive type of Christianity which these doctrines of Christianity have created when held in comparatively unobscured, unencumbered purity. There is no greater task before Christianity to-day than that of fixing the roots of these great doctrines fast in the soil of America and the Anglo-Saxon race and thereby establishing evangelical Christianity, which alone can regenerate a lost world.

If these truths are uprooted here, we will never save enough of vital Christianity for adequate transplanting on the great continents. If we save the world, we must have something with which to save it. The heathen world cannot be saved if we do not save these doctrines ; and the only reasonable hope we have of saving them is in America. There is not now in any land of the globe a supply adequate to the transportation demands of the missionary enterprise. In every other part of the world either they have never conquered, or recent battles have reversed their victories and the religious life for which they stand has been mutilated. The problem of problems in propagating apostolic Christianity to-day is such a safe-keeping of these great principles and such a campaign for them as to give them a complete and final victory in America.

The world's supply of saving doctrine, as of men, and of material support for the missionary enterprise, must come mainly from America. If the supply fails, whole nations will remain destitute of the saving gospel. In the message sent from every other land, the hierarchical and ecclesiastical note sounds so loud, and ceremonialism so muffles the voice of the evangel that it is scarcely heard. The spectacular takes the place of the oracular. Some have gone forth in the name of missionary, never having caught the tune of the gospel acclaim at all. They do not know the scale of the inspired notation, and they have never gotten the key of the

cross in their message. The reasonable hope for evangelical religion in the world is the preservation and the planting of evangelical truth in America. The supreme ambition of Roman Catholicism is the conquest of America. Rome has never had an Anglo-Saxon nation as an asset and an ally. Her hope was deferred by her defeat in England in the time of Henry the Eighth. She now looks with covetous eye on America. There is no agent or instrument that she is not ready to use. Politicians, the secular press, federal patronage as well as her own powerful ecclesiastical organization have all been used. All the Protestant denominations combined do not maintain so watchful an oversight of legislative affairs at Washington as does this hierarchy. And that Rome is succeeding in America, the facts plainly declare. She has in ten years added to her membership in America more communicants than all Protestant Christianity has evangelized in Roman Catholic territory in the whole century of modern missions. Let this go on and give Rome this Anglo-American nation, and evangelical Christianity is forever doomed.

It is no premature alarm which calls for the guards to be on duty in America. "Is there no paganism threatening America?" asks Dr. Forsyth. Yes, verily, and very much; and worse than paganism; and the forces which militate against evangelicalism have greatly multiplied in our land and have altogether lost their timidity. The truth is, orthodoxy is verily beset by a bandit mob

the like of which was never seen. The freedom of the press and the liberty of conscience, won by evangelical Christianity, has for the time being added fury to the assault. Under the protection which Christianity has secured, magazines, popular fiction and daily newspapers, and even theological and scientific "chairs" founded by Christian benevolence, are used as batteries from which editors, authors, contributors, a heterogeneous insurgency, pour their fusillade into the ranks of orthodoxy with the hope of bringing down the colours of essential and historic Christianity. The passion for novelty and fame makes them blind to the most sacred interests of the soul and to the plainest lessons of history. Despising the authority of the Bible and the wisdom of prophets and seers, the writers of dime novels, often untaught in the rudiments of theology or morals, turn their imaginings into text-books on matters of divinity and the soul. Now and then a pulpiteer, with the Bible as a breastwork, suddenly turns loose a broadside upon an unsuspecting congregation and goes over to the insurgents. Even street corners are often congested with those who wait on the wisdom of some dispenser of a new ism and drink down some religious cure-all. The pamphleteer is in the land and literature is without money and without price. The female theologue, and the "holy roller" swell the ranks to carry the war into the wilderness. To this insurgent army is added a million a year of immigrants among whom is great need, but among

whom also are many malcontents, dangerous and evil persons. In the face of all this, there are among us those neutral spirits who counsel the ministry to be "liberal" and "broad," which means throw open the door to everything new whether false or true and reject on the presentation of its card all venerable doctrine which seeks admittance to your hospitality. "Well, as a matter of fact, liberalism has tended to destroy positive belief, distinctive experience and aggressive Christianity." [1]

Much of this we have not taken seriously and much of the attention given it has been with false tactics and poor generalship. Meanwhile, the untutored multitudes, among whom are many of the brightest and most capacious youth of the land, are unable to discern between truth and sophistry, between Christian doctrine and philosophical speculation. Continued neglect of instruction in Christian essentials will soon carry the battle against us. These multitudes must be enlisted and all our forces drilled in fundamental truth if the friends of evangelical Christianity do not wish to witness a dismal failure and see the gospel defeated in its world-campaign.

We must save these truths, for it is with them that we can save the world, and their destiny is emphatically bound up with the issues which face the Christian people of America. The foreign

[1] "Positive Preaching and the Modern Mind," by Dr. Forsyth, p. 209.

missionary enterprise is already dependent upon American resources, of men and money and gospel for its success. "Six out of seven of Christendom's missionaries come from the United States of America."[1] "Eighty-five dollars of every one hundred dollars put into missionary enterprise are contributed by English speaking Christians."[2] No other class of missionaries carry these fundamental truths so to the front as do our own men and women. The insistent demand of those who are conducting the foreign missionary enterprise is for an increased supply of men and women, and to this should be added a perfect quality and a full quantity of the gospel. Neglect of the home missionary industry will shortly bring to a standstill and doom to inevitable failure the whole foreign missionary enterprise. Home missions manifestly grow in importance with a growing sense of the magnitude and necessity for foreign operations, and must grow in corresponding intensity and comprehensiveness. We must improve the quality and increase the store of American Christianity and provide more adequate facilities for its transport or we can never do great things in American Christianity on the foreign market. I mean, we must have a finer type of Christianity at home, not in exceptional examples, but in average professors, and we must have more of these made

[1] Jevons, "Introduction to a Study of Comparative Religions," p. 265.

[2] J. Campbell White.

out of the fifty millions of our unsaved population, which, as the case now stands, are an unavailable supply, and we must convert a larger share of American fortunes to Christ in order to have adequate means to finance the world-campaign.

It is conceded on all hands that the dominant religious body in England to-day is steadily tending back to Rome and thereby sadly weakening the evangelican and Anglo-Saxon protest and missionary advance. The lapse of Protestantism in England is a call for an evangelican revival in America.

On the other hand who can estimate, or overestimate, the missionary value of one solidly Christian nation? What a commendation of these great doctrines abroad would be the fact that they had been accepted and demonstrated at home! Evangelical Christianity has never had the support and endorsement of a single nation to strengthen its missionary effort abroad. And yet the missionary purpose and program of the Father are that nations as well as individuals shall be given to the Son. "Behold, thou shalt call a nation, that thou knowest not; and a nation that knew not thee shall run unto thee, because of Jehovah thy God, and for the Holy One of Israel" (Isa. lv. 5). Turn this nation thoroughly to Christ and soon "all nations shall call Him happy" (Psa. lxxii. 17). The true "uplift of China," and of Africa also, would come if American missionaries could point to their home land as an example of a nation which had accepted and proved the gospel. Char-

acter speaks louder than words, and the unchristian character of so-called Christian America is the standing reproach which the foreign missionary must face. The ungodliness in America and of Americans abroad, and the census reports that two-thirds of the responsible citizens of America have not accepted the evangelical gospel which we offer other nations is the unanswerable argument put up to the foreign missionary by the intelligent heathen he would convert.

That is the home mission problem. It lays equal emphasis upon the business of the home missionary, the state missionary, the home pastor and the private domestic Christian. All these must work out the task of making the highest and holiest type of Christian character, multiplying believers and deepening in Christians at home a sense of Christ's lordship over their material possessions. No man can magnify his office in any sphere of labour on this home field and minify any other department of it. No pastor can find great enthusiasm or justification for his work or any other home work while he is indifferent to home missions, and no foreign missionary worker or agent can have high hopes of his enterprise who looks with composure upon the work of the home pastor and the home missionary. Of course, it is equally true that the home missionary and the home pastor who fails to see the relation of his domestic work to the remotest missionary operations cannot enjoy the fullest inspiration in the

work at home. Each needs the other's vision to make his own perfect and his heart strong for his task.

We often hear it stated that great changes are taking place in China, that China is awaking and becoming a mighty power, and, therefore, we should speedily evangelize China. This is true, without doubt it is true, and the conclusion is sound and reasonable. But, if China is awaking, America is awake; if China is becoming, America has become. More marvellous and significant changes have taken place in America in recent times than in any land on the globe. It will be many a decade before China will reach a point of development already attained by America and have the present influence of America in the councils of nations. And it must be remembered that if China is awaking, it is America, more than any other country, that is awaking her. China has felt the electric thrill of American commerce, education and militarism and is sitting up in wild-eyed wonder. America is penetrating other lands with a conspicuousness and recognized influence which scarcely any other nation approaches. And every American abroad is a help or hindrance to gospel evangelization in the land of his adoption or his itinerary. We speak loudly through the character of our wealthy tourists, our commerical agents and the representatives of our marvellous industrial and commercial enterprises which girt the globe; through our marine, our international

relationships, our diplomats, our scholars, our literature and the quality of our exports. All these voices either confirm or contradict the missionary message, either strengthen the missionary's testimony or shame and defeat him at his lonely post of duty.

America controls more of the modern implements for advancing civilization than any nation on the globe. Her civil and educational institutions shine with the brilliancy of modern progress. Her utilitarian sciences and material resources give her a competitive advantage. Moreover by racial instinct and democratic training we develop pioneersmen who more than any people living can and will carry forth and use these implements. Matthew Arnold studied American potentialities and declared, "America holds the future." The penetrating Alexander Hamilton said while the nation was yet in its cradle, "It is ours either to be a grave in which the hopes of the world shall be entombed or the pillar of cloud to pilot the world forward."

America is a nation in its youth. Nations, like individuals, must be converted young or may not be converted at all, certainly not without great difficulty. If converted in youth, they bring to the cause of religion maturing powers far ampler than those which belong to age. To save America is to give Christianity as an asset its buoyancy, vigour, power of initiation, its pioneering spirit, courage and strength. There is no other such national prize to take for Christ.

But this nation is also beset by the sins of youth, and, therefore, peculiarly in need of the help of the gospel. Self-importance, precipitancy and zest for experimentation, a desire for a knowledge of the ways of the world, and a surplus energy, are the sins and snares of this young Republic. Growing wealth, with its allurements for the young, opportunity for self-gratification, occasion for self-gratulation add to the problem and emphasize the need of saving America. All these weaknesses signify corresponding powers which may be used in conquering the world for our King. But what will save this young nation and put all its possibilities and powers into the missionary enterprise? Nothing, absolutely nothing, but that which alone is capable of saving it from its roots, namely the gospel of Christ. Youth was never saved by maxims, admonitions and legislative restraints. Something must get hold of it to save it, something which has power to generate impulses, a subtle force that takes the heart captive and holds it by the cords of its romantic, impulsive soul. Only He who can call forth love and answer the love He has called forth with a plenitude of love, can redeem and transform this youthful America and fix its life and habits for ripe and fruitful national maturity. We shall never overstate the importance of a fact and a work like this. This regenerating, transforming, renewing gospel we have tried to exalt must, we repeat, be saved in and must save America.

History should be our teacher. A failure to

keep Christianity evangelical on the fields of its conquests has cost Christianity more millions of allies than it has subsequently evangelized among the heathen nations. The loss has been total in some lands and still goes on in many quarters. The weeds of heresy spring up in the furrows of the gospel plow and many an acre, once beautiful and fragrant with Christian institutions, is now disfigured and noxious with rank heresies. If evangelical Christianity had held all that it has ever taken, we would now be drawing in our line for a final consummation of our campaign, and we would have back of advancing Christianity resources of men and money sufficient to supply every need of the campaign. If we had held our own, we could now send to the front as many missionaries from Italy as we receive immigrants and of a vastly superior type, because of their improvement by tutoring in evangelical faith instead of Romish error. Those who might have been missionary forces are a thorny mission field because we lost what we early won. The tendency to overgrow and supplant evangelical Christianity still goes on and is in process in every city and vast sections of our country. New England and New York need a thousand missionaries for the hard and long fight to recover what evangelical religion has lost in that part of America. While we have slept an enemy has sown tares where gospel plowmen once subsoiled and sowed the precious grain of gospel truth, and lo! the tares choke the wheat and shorten the harvest.

The Christian history of Asia and Europe is already being repeated with variations in our own land, while the yet unevangelized nations of the earth wait for the gospel which a triumphant evangelical Christianity in America alone can supply.

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